

AT THE KREMLIN.

Napoleon watching the burning of Moscow.

(After the picture by Verestchagin.)

The Royal School Series

The
Royal Crown
Indian Reader

A Selection of Literary Extracts



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS

London, Edinburgh, and New York

1911

CONTENTS.

* * *The Italics indicate Poetical Pieces.*

1. The Valley of Diamonds,	7	17. The Burning of Moscow, 1812,	91
2. Crusoe's Cave,	15	18. Humanity in War,	98
3. Prisoner in Lilliput,	20	19. The Battle of Plassey,	103
4. Life in Brobdnag,	27	20. The Krakatoa Eruption,	110
5. The Merchant's Son,	32	21. Death of Pliny the Elder,	115
6. Escape of Rob Roy,	37	22. Escape from the Bastille,	119
7. A Combat in the Desert,	44	23. Damascus,	130
8. Silkworms,	50	24. Death of Socrates,	134
9. About Icebergs,	55	25. Sports, Agriculture, and Trade of the Middle Ages,	139
10. A Lumber Camp,	60	26. <i>The King of the Crocodiles</i> ,	146
11. Native Sports in Hawaii,	64	27. <i>An Oriental Legend</i> ,	151
12. The Land of the White Elephant,	67	28. <i>The Plate of Gold</i> ,	155
13. The Overland Route,	72	29. <i>Elegy written in a Country Churchyard</i> ,	157
14. Uses of Forests,	76		
15. The Great Fire of London,	82		
16. The Siege of Gibraltar, 1782,	86		

THE ROYAL CROWN INDIAN READER.

I. THE VALLEY OF DIAMONDS.

We went from island to island, and bartered our goods very profitably. One day we landed on an island which was covered with a variety of fruit trees, but so desert that we could not discover any habitation, or the trace of a human being. We walked in the meadows, and along the brooks that watered them; and whilst some of my companions were amusing themselves with gathering fruits and flowers, I took out some of the wine and provisions I had brought with me, and seated myself by a little stream under some trees, which afforded a delightful shade.

I made a good meal of what I had with me, and when I had satisfied my hunger, sleep gradually stole over my senses. I cannot say how long I slept, but when I awoke the ship was no longer in view. I was much surprised at this circumstance, and rose to look for my companions; but they were all gone, and I could only just descry the vessel in full sail, at such a distance that I soon lost sight of it.

You may imagine what were my reflections when I found myself in this dismal state. I thought I should have died with grief. I groaned and shrieked aloud; I beat my head, and threw myself on the ground, where I remained a long time, overwhelmed by a rushing current of thoughts, each more distressing than the last. I reproached myself a thousand times for my folly in not being contented with my first voyage, which ought to have satisfied my craving for adventure; but all my regrets were of no avail, and my repentance came too late. At length I resigned myself to the will of Heaven, and not knowing what would become of me, I ascended a high tree, from whence I looked on all sides, to try if I could not discover some object to inspire me with hope.

Casting my eyes towards the sea, I could discern only water and sky; but perceiving on the land side a white spot, I descended from the tree, and taking up the remainder of my provisions, I walked towards the object, which was so distant that at first I could not distinguish what it was. As I approached, I perceived it to be a ball of prodigious size; and when I got near enough to touch it, I found it was soft. I walked round it to see if there was an opening, but could find none; and the ball appeared so smooth that any attempt to climb it would have been fruitless. Its circumference might be about fifty paces. The sun was then near setting; the air grew suddenly dark, as if obscured by a thick cloud. I was surprised at this change, but how much did my

amazement increase when I perceived it to be occasioned by a bird of most extraordinary size, which was flying towards me. I recollected having heard sailors speak of a bird called a roc, and I concluded that the great white ball which had drawn my attention must be the egg of this bird. I was not mistaken, for shortly afterwards it lighted on the white ball, and placed itself as if to sit upon it.

When I saw this huge fowl coming I drew near to the egg, so that I had one of the claws of the bird just before me; this claw was as big as the trunk of a large tree. I tied myself to the claw with the linen of my turban, in hopes that the roc, when it took its flight the next morning, would carry me with it out of that desert island. My project succeeded, for at break of day the roc flew away, and bore me to such a height that I could no longer distinguish the earth; then it descended with such rapidity that I almost lost my senses. When the roc had alighted, I quickly untied the knot that bound me to its foot, and had scarcely released myself when it darted on a serpent of immeasurable length, and seizing the snake in its beak, flew away.

The place in which the roc left me was a very deep valley, surrounded on all sides by mountains of such height that their summits were lost in the clouds, and so steep that there was no possibility of climbing them. This was a fresh embarrassment; for I had no reason to rejoice at my change of situation, when I compared it with the island I had left. As I walked along this valley. I remarked that

it was strewn with diamonds, some of which were of astonishing size. I amused myself for some time by examining them, but soon perceived from afar some objects which destroyed my pleasure, and created in me great fear. These were a great number of serpents, so large that the smallest of them would have swallowed an elephant with ease. During the daytime they hid themselves in caves from the roc, their mortal enemy, and only came out when it was dark. I passed the day in walking about the valley, resting myself occasionally when an opportunity offered; and when the sun set I retired into a small cave, where I thought I should be in safety. I closed the entrance, which was low and narrow, with a stone large enough to protect me from the serpents, but which yet allowed a little light to pass into the cave.

I supped on part of my provisions, and could plainly hear the serpents which began to make their appearance. Their tremendous hissings caused me great fear, and, as you may suppose, I did not pass a very quiet night. When the day appeared, the serpents retired. I left my cave with trembling, and may truly say that I walked a long time on diamonds without feeling the least desire to possess them. At last I fell asleep, for I had not once closed my eyes during all the previous night. I had scarcely begun to doze when something falling near me, with a great noise, awoke me. It was a large piece of fresh meat, and at the same moment I saw a number of other pieces rolling down the rocks from above.



"Carried me up with it to its nest."

I had always supposed the account to be fictitious which I had heard related by seamen and others of the Valley of Diamonds, and of the means by which merchants procured these precious gems. I now knew it to be true. The method of proceeding is this:—The merchants go to the mountains which surround the valley about the time that the eagles hatch their young. They cut large pieces of meat, and throw them into the valley, and the diamonds on which the lumps of meat fall stick to them. The eagles, which are larger and stronger in that country than in any other, seize these pieces of meat to carry to their young at the top of the rocks. The merchants then run to the eagles' nests, and by various noises oblige the birds to retreat, and then take the diamonds that have stuck to the pieces of meat. This is the method they employ to procure the diamonds from the valley, which is inaccessible on every side.

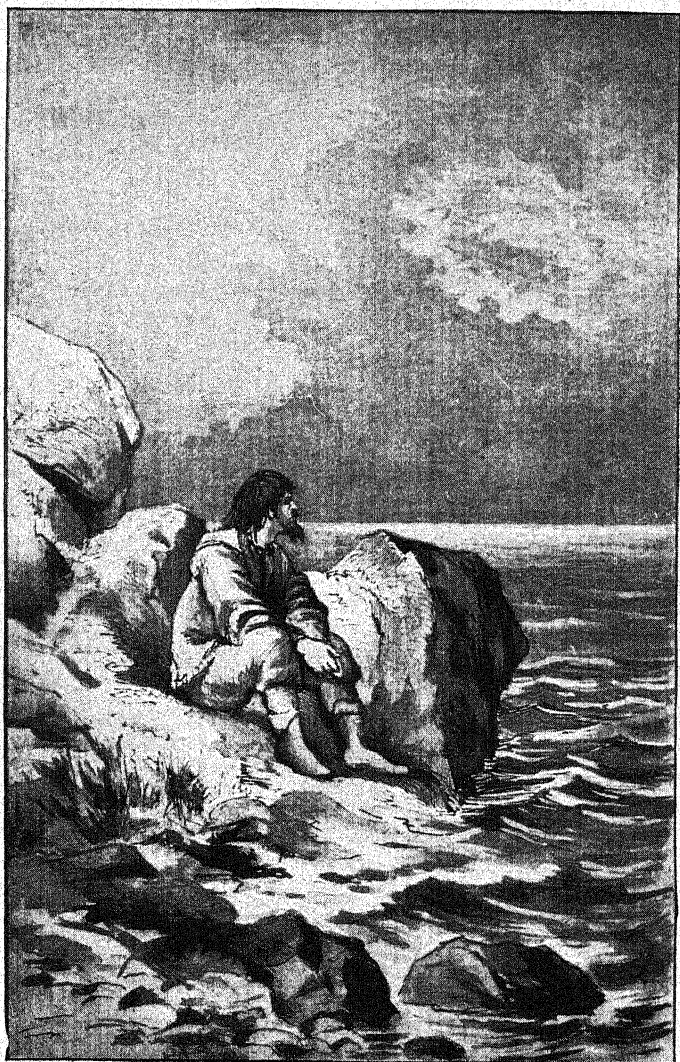
I had supposed it impossible ever to leave this valley, and began to look on it as my tomb; but now I changed my opinion, and turned my thoughts to the preservation of my life. I began by collecting the largest diamonds I could find, and with these I filled the leather bag in which I had carried my provisions. I then took one of the largest pieces of meat, and tied it tight round me with the linen of my turban. In this state I laid myself on the ground, tightly securing my leather bag round me. I had not been long in this position before the eagles began to descend, and each seized a piece

of meat, with which it flew away. One of the strongest darted on the piece to which I was attached, and carried me up with it to its nest. The merchants then began their cries to frighten away the eagles; and when they had obliged the birds to quit their prey, one of them approached, but was much surprised and alarmed on seeing me. He soon, however, recovered from his fear, and instead of inquiring by what means I came here, began to quarrel with me for trespassing on what he called his property.

"You will speak to me with pity instead of anger," said I, "when you learn by what means I reached this place. Console yourself, for I have diamonds for you as well as for myself; and my diamonds are more valuable than those of all the other merchants put together. I have myself chosen some of the finest at the bottom of the valley, and have them in this bag." Saying this, I showed him my store. I had scarcely finished speaking when the other merchants, perceiving me, flocked round me with great astonishment, and their wonder was still greater when I related my history.

They conducted me to the place where they lived together, and on seeing my diamonds they all expressed their admiration, and declared they had never seen any to equal them in size or quality.

"The Arabian Nights' Entertainments."



ROBINSON CRUSOE.

2. CRUSOE'S CAVE.

The mouth of this hollow was at the bottom of a great rock, where, by mere accident (I would say, if I did not see abundant reason to ascribe all such things now to Providence), I was cutting down some thick branches of trees to make charcoal; and before I go on, I must observe the reason of my making this charcoal, which was this: I was afraid of making a smoke about my habitation, as I said before. And yet I could not live there without baking my bread, cooking my meat, etc.; so I contrived to burn some wood here, as I had seen done in England—that is, under turf—until it became charcoal; and then putting the fire out, I preserved the coal to carry home, and perform the other services for which fire was wanting, without danger of smoke. But this is by-the-bye.

While I was cutting down some wood here, I perceived that behind a very thick branch of low brushwood or underwood there was a kind of hollow place. I was curious to look in it; and getting with difficulty into the mouth of it, I found it was pretty large—that is to say, sufficient for me to stand upright in it, and perhaps another with me; but I must confess to you that I made more haste out than I did in, when, looking farther into the place, which was perfectly dark, I saw two broad shining eyes of some creature, which twinkled like two stars, the dim light from the cave's mouth shining directly in, and making the reflection. However,

after some pause I recovered myself, and plucking up my courage, I took up a firebrand, and in I rushed again, with the stick flaming in my hand.

I had not got three steps in but I was almost as much frightened as I was before; for I heard a very loud sigh, like that of a man in some pain, and it was followed by a broken noise, as of words half expressed, and then a deep sigh again. I stepped back, and was indeed struck with such a surprise that it put me into a cold sweat. But still, plucking up my spirits as well as I could, and encouraging myself a little with considering that the power and presence of God were everywhere, and were able to protect me, I stepped forward again; and by the light of the firebrand, holding it up a little over my head, I saw lying on the ground a most monstrous, frightful old he-goat, gasping for life, and dying, indeed, of mere old age.

I stirred him a little, to see if I could get him out; and he essayed to get up, but was not able to raise himself. And I thought with myself he might even lie there; for if he had frightened me so, he would certainly fright any of the savages, if any of them should be so hardy as to come in there while he had any life in him.

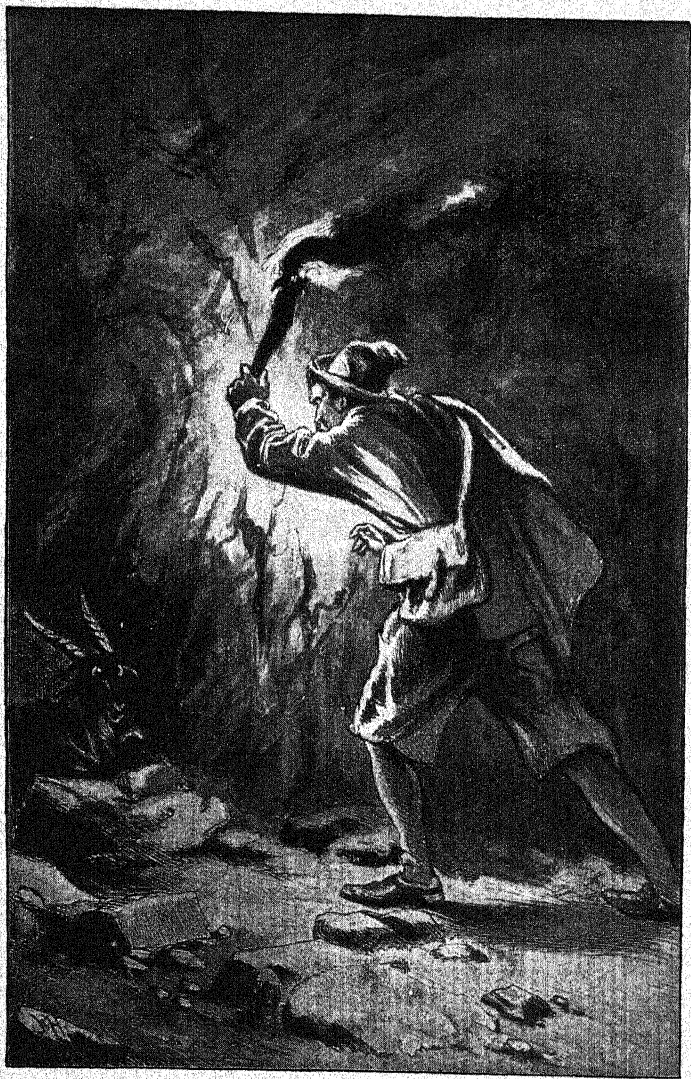
I was now recovered from my surprise, and began to look round me, when I found the cave was but very small—that is to say, it might be about twelve feet square—but in no manner of shape, neither round nor square, no hands ever having been employed in making it but those of mere Nature. I

observed, also, that there was a place at the farther side of it that went in further, but was so low that it required me to creep upon my hands and knees to go into it, and whither it went I knew not; so, having no candle, I gave it over for that time, but resolved to come again the next day, provided with candles.

Accordingly, the next day I came, provided with six large candles of my own making (for I had made very good candles now of goats' tallow); and going into this low place, I was obliged to creep upon all fours, as I have said, almost ten yards, which, by the way, I thought was a venture bold enough, considering that I knew not how far it might go, nor what was beyond it.

When I had got through the strait, I found the roof rose higher up, I believe near twenty feet; but never was such a glorious sight seen in the island, I daresay, as it was to look round the sides and roof of this vault or cave: the walls reflected a hundred thousand lights to me from my two candles. What it was in the rock, whether diamonds or any other precious stones, or gold, which I rather supposed it to be, I knew not.

The place I was in was a most delightful cavity or grotto, though perfectly dark. The floor was dry and level, and had a sort of a small loose gravel upon it, so that there was no nauseous or venomous creature to be seen, neither was there any damp or wet on the sides or roof. The only difficulty in it was the entrance, which, however, as it was a place of



"A frightful old he-goat."

security, and such a retreat as I wanted, I thought was a convenience; so that I was really rejoiced at the discovery, and resolved, without any delay, to bring some of those things which I was most anxious about to this place. Particularly, I resolved to bring hither my magazine of powder, and all my spare arms—namely, two fowling-pieces, for I had three in all; and three muskets, for of them I had eight in all. So I kept at my castle only five, which stood ready mounted, like pieces of cannon, on my outmost fence, and were ready also to take out upon any expedition.

Upon this occasion of removing my ammunition, I happened to open the barrel of powder which I took up out of the sea, and which had been wet; and I found that the water had penetrated about two or three inches into the powder on every side, which, caking and growing hard, had preserved the inside like a kernel in the shell, so that I had near sixty pounds of very good powder in the centre of the cask. This was a very agreeable discovery to me at this time; so I carried all away thither, never keeping above two or three pounds of powder with me in my castle, for fear of a surprise of any kind. I also carried thither all the lead I had left for bullets.

*From "Robinson Crusoe,"
by DANIEL DEFOE.*

3. PRISONER IN LILLIPUT.

I took up the two officers in my hands, put them first into my coat-pockets, and then into every other pocket about me, except my two fobs, and another secret pocket wherein I had some little necessities that were of no consequence to any but myself. In one of my fobs there was a silver watch, and in the other a small quantity of gold in a purse. These gentlemen, having pens, ink, and paper about them, made an exact inventory of everything they saw; and, when they had done, desired I would set them down, that they might deliver it to the emperor. This inventory I afterwards translated into English, and it is word for word as follows:—

In the right coat-pocket of the great man-mountain, after the strictest search, we found only one great piece of coarse cloth, large enough to be a foot-cloth for your Majesty's chief room of state. In the left pocket we saw a huge silver chest, with a cover of the same metal, which we, the searchers, were not able to lift. We desired it should be opened; and one of us stepping into it, found himself up to the knees in a sort of dust, some part whereof flying up to our faces, set us both a-sneezing for several times together.

In his right waistcoat-pocket we found a prodigious bundle of white, thin substance, about the bigness of three men, tied with a strong cable, and marked with black figures, which we humbly con-

ceive to be writings, every letter almost half as large as the palm of our hands. In the left there was a sort of engine, from the back of which were extended twenty long poles, resembling the palisades before your Majesty's court, wherewith, we conjecture, the man-mountain combs his head; for we did not always trouble him with questions, because we found it a great difficulty to make him understand us.

In the large pocket, on the right side of his middle cover, we saw a hollow pillar of iron, about the length of a man, fastened to a strong piece of timber larger than the pillar; and upon one side of the pillar were huge pieces of iron sticking out, cut into strange figures, which we knew not what to make of. In the left pocket, another engine of the same kind.

In the smaller pocket on the right side were several round, flat pieces of white and red metal, of different bulk. Some of the white, which seemed to be silver, were so large and heavy that my comrade and I could hardly lift them. In the left pocket were two black pillars, irregularly shaped. We could not without difficulty reach the top of them as we stood at the bottom of his pocket. One of them was covered, and seemed all of a piece; but at the upper end of the other there appeared a white, round substance, about twice the bigness of our heads. Within each of these was enclosed a prodigious plate of steel, which by our orders we obliged him to show us, because we apprehended they might be dangerous

engines. He took them out of their cases, and told us that in his own country his practice was to shave his beard with one of these, and cut his meat with the other.

There were two pockets which we could not enter. These he called his fobs: they were two large slits cut into the tops of his middle cover, but squeezed close by the pressure of his body. Out of the right fob hung a great silver chain, with a wonderful kind of engine at the bottom. We directed him to draw out whatever was at the end of that chain, which appeared to be a globe, half silver and half of some transparent metal; for on the transparent side we saw certain strange figures circularly drawn, and thought we could touch them, till we found our fingers stopped by that lucid substance.

He put this engine to our ears, which made an incessant noise, like that of a water-mill; and we conjecture it is either some unknown animal or the god that he worships; but we are more inclined to the latter opinion, because he assured us (if we understand him right, for he expressed himself very imperfectly) that he seldom did anything without consulting it. He called it his oracle, and said it pointed out the time for every action of his life.

From the left fob he took out a net almost large enough for a fisherman, but contrived to open and shut like a purse. We found therein several massy pieces of yellow metal, which, if they be real gold, must be of immense value.

Having thus, in obedience to your Majesty's com-

mands, diligently searched all his pockets, we observed a girdle about his waist made of the hide of some prodigious animal, from which on the left side hung a sword of the length of five men, and on the right a bag or pouch divided into two cells, each cell capable of holding three of your Majesty's subjects. In one of these cells were several globes or balls of a most ponderous metal, about the bigness of our heads; the other cell contained a heap of certain black grains, but of no great bulk or weight, for we could hold above fifty of them in the palms of our hands.

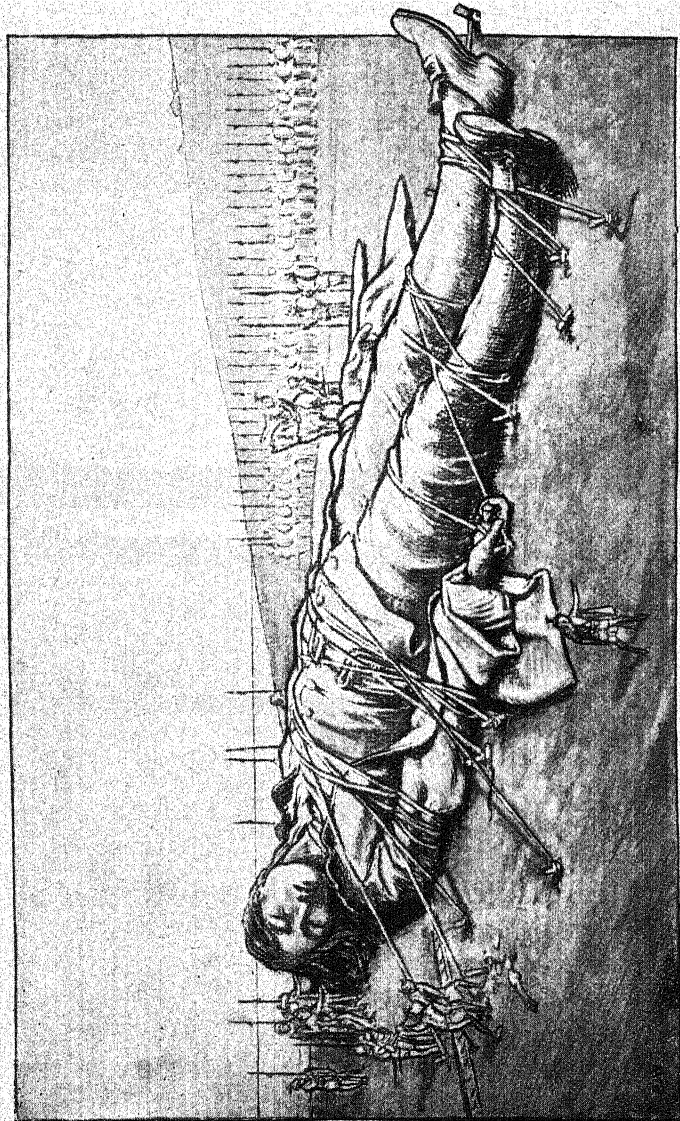
This is an exact inventory of what we found about the body of the man-mountain, who treated us with great civility, and due respect to your Majesty's commission.

Signed and sealed on the fourth day of the eighty-ninth moon of your Majesty's auspicious reign.

CLEFRIN FRELOCK.

MARSI FRELOCK.

When this inventory was read over to the emperor, he directed me, although in very gentle terms, to deliver up the various articles. He first called for my sword, which I took out, scabbard and all. In the meantime he ordered three thousand of the choicest troops (who then attended him) to surround me at a distance, with their bows and arrows just ready to discharge; but I did not observe it, for my eyes were wholly fixed on his Majesty. He then desired me to draw my sword, which, although it had got some rust by the sea-water, was in most parts exceed-



PRISONER IN LILLIPUT.

ingly bright. I did so, and immediately all the troops gave a shout between terror and surprise; for the sun shone clear, and the reflection dazzled their eyes as I waved the sword to and fro in my hand. His Majesty, who is a most magnanimous prince, was less daunted than I could expect: he ordered me to return it into the scabbard, and cast it on the ground as gently as I could, about six feet from the end of my chain.

The next thing he demanded was one of the hollow iron pillars, by which he meant my pocket pistols. I drew it out, and at his desire, as well as I could, expressed to him the use of it; and charging it only with powder, which, by the closeness of my pouch, happened to escape wetting in the sea (an inconvenience against which all prudent mariners take special care to provide), I first cautioned the emperor not to be afraid, and then I let it off in the air. The astonishment here was much greater than at the sight of the sword. Hundreds fell down as if they had been struck dead; and even the emperor, although he stood his ground, could not recover himself for some time.

I delivered up both my pistols in the same manner as I had done my sword, and then my pouch of powder and bullets, begging him that the former might be kept from fire, for it would kindle with the slightest spark, and blow up his imperial palace into the air. I likewise delivered up my watch, which the emperor was very curious to see, and commanded two of the tallest men amongst his guards

to bear it on a pole upon their shoulders. He was amazed at the continual noise it made, and the motion of the minute-hand, which he could easily discern, for their sight is much more acute than ours. He asked the opinions of his learned men about it, which were various and remote, as the reader may well imagine without my repeating; although, indeed, I could not very perfectly understand them. I then gave up my silver and copper money, my purse, with nine large pieces of gold and some smaller ones; my knife and razor, my comb and silver snuff-box, my handkerchief and journal-book. My sword, pistols, and pouch were conveyed in carriages to his Majesty's stores, but the rest of my goods were returned to me.

I had, as I before observed, one private pocket, which escaped their search, wherein there were a pair of spectacles (which I sometimes use for the weakness of mine eyes), a pocket telescope, and some other little conveniences; which, being of no consequence to the emperor, I did not think myself bound in honour to discover, and I apprehended they might be lost or spoiled if I ventured them out of my possession.

From "Gulliver's Travels," by DEAN SWIFT.

4. LIFE IN BROBDINGNAG.

The queen, who often used to hear me talk of my sea voyages, and took all occasions to divert me when I was melancholy, asked me whether I understood how to handle a sail or an oar, and whether a little exercise of rowing might not be convenient for my health. I answered that I understood both very well; for although my proper employment had been to be surgeon or doctor to the ship, yet often upon a pinch I was forced to work like a common mariner. But I could not see how this could be done in their country, where the smallest wherry was equal to a first-rate man-of-war among us, and such a boat as I could manage would never live in any of their rivers. Her Majesty said if I would contrive a boat, her own joiner should make it, and she would provide a place for me to sail in.

The fellow was an ingenious workman, and by my instructions in ten days finished a pleasure-boat, with all its tackling, able conveniently to hold eight Europeans. When it was finished, the queen was so delighted that she ran with it in her lap to the king, who ordered it to be put in a cistern full of water, with me in it, by way of trial, where I could not manage my two sculls, or little oars, for want of room. But the queen had before contrived another project. She ordered the joiner to make a wooden trough of three hundred feet long, fifty broad, and eight deep, which, being well pitched to prevent leaking, was placed on the floor along the

wall in an outer room of the palace. It had a tap near the bottom to let out the water when it began to grow stale, and two servants could easily fill it in half an hour.

Here I often used to row for my own diversion, as well as that of the queen and her ladies, who thought themselves well entertained with my skill and agility. Sometimes I would put up my sail, and then my business was only to steer, while the ladies gave me a gale with their fans; and when they were weary, some of their pages would blow my sail forward with their breath, while I showed my art by steering starboard or larboard as I pleased. When I had done, Glumdalclitch always carried back my boat into her closet, and hung it on a nail to dry.

In this exercise I once met with an accident, which had like to have cost me my life; for one of the pages having put my boat into the trough, the governess who attended Glumdalclitch very officiously lifted me up to place me in the boat. But I happened to slip through her fingers, and should infallibly have fallen down forty feet upon the floor, if, by the luckiest chance in the world, I had not been stopped by a pin that stuck in the good gentlewoman's dress. The head of the pin caught in my clothing, and thus I was held in the air till Glumdalclitch ran to my relief.

Another time one of the servants, whose office it was to fill my trough every third day with fresh water, was so careless as to let a huge frog (not

perceiving it) slip out of his pail. The frog lay concealed till I was put into my boat; but then, seeing a resting-place, climbed up, and made it lean so much on one side that I was forced to balance it with all my weight on the other, to prevent overturning. When the frog was got in, it hopped at once half the length of the boat, and then over my head, backwards and forwards, daubing my face and clothes with its odious slime. The largeness of its features made it appear the most deformed animal that can be conceived. However, I desired Glumdalclitch to let me deal with it alone. I banged it a good while with one of my skulls, and at last forced it to leap out of the boat.

But the greatest danger I ever underwent in that kingdom was from a monkey, who belonged to one of the clerks of the kitchen. Glumdalclitch had locked me up in her room, while she went somewhere upon business or to pay a visit. The weather being very warm, the window was left open, as well as the windows and the door of my bigger box in which I usually lived, because of its largeness and conveniency. As I sat quietly meditating at my table, I heard something bounce in at the open window, and skip about from one side to the other; whereat, although I was much alarmed, yet I ventured to look out, but not stirring from my seat, and then I saw this frolicsome animal frisking and leaping up and down, till at last he came to my box, which he seemed to view with great pleasure and curiosity, peeping in at the door and every window.

I retreated to the farther corner of my room or box; but the monkey, looking in at every side, put me into such a fright that I wanted presence of mind to conceal myself under the bed, as I might easily have done. After some time spent in peeping, grinning, and chattering, he at last espied me, and reaching one of his paws in at the door, as a cat does when she plays with a mouse, although I often shifted places to avoid him, he at length seized the lappet of my coat (which, being made of that country silk, was very thick and strong), and dragged me out.

He took me up in his right fore foot and held me as a nurse does a child, just as I have seen the same sort of creature do with a kitten in Europe; and when I offered to struggle, he squeezed me so hard that I thought it more prudent to submit. I have good reason to believe that he took me for a young one of his own species, by his often stroking my face very gently with his other paw.

In these diversions he was interrupted by a noise at the door of the room, as if somebody were opening it; whereupon he suddenly leaped up to the window at which he had come in, and thence upon the tiles, walking upon three legs, and holding me in the fourth, till he clambered up to a roof next to ours. I heard Glumdalclitch give a shriek at the moment he was carrying me out. The poor girl was almost distracted. That quarter of the palace was all in an uproar: the servants ran for

End of the first part of the History

ladders; the monkey was seen by hundreds in the court sitting upon the ridge of a building, holding me like a baby in one of his fore paws, whereat many of the rabble below could not forbear laughing; neither do I think they justly ought to be blamed, for without question the sight was ridiculous enough to everybody but myself. Some of the people threw up stones, hoping to drive the monkey down; but this was strictly forbidden, or else very probably my brains had been dashed out.

The ladders were now applied, and mounted by several men; which the monkey observing, and finding himself almost encompassed, not being able to make speed enough with his three legs, let me drop on a ridge-tile, and made his escape. Here I sat for some time, five hundred yards from the ground, expecting every moment to be blown down by the wind, or to fall by my own giddiness, and come tumbling over and over from the ridge to the eaves; but an honest lad, one of my nurse's footmen, climbed up, and putting me into his pocket, brought me down safe.

From "Gulliver's Travels," by DEAN SWIFT.

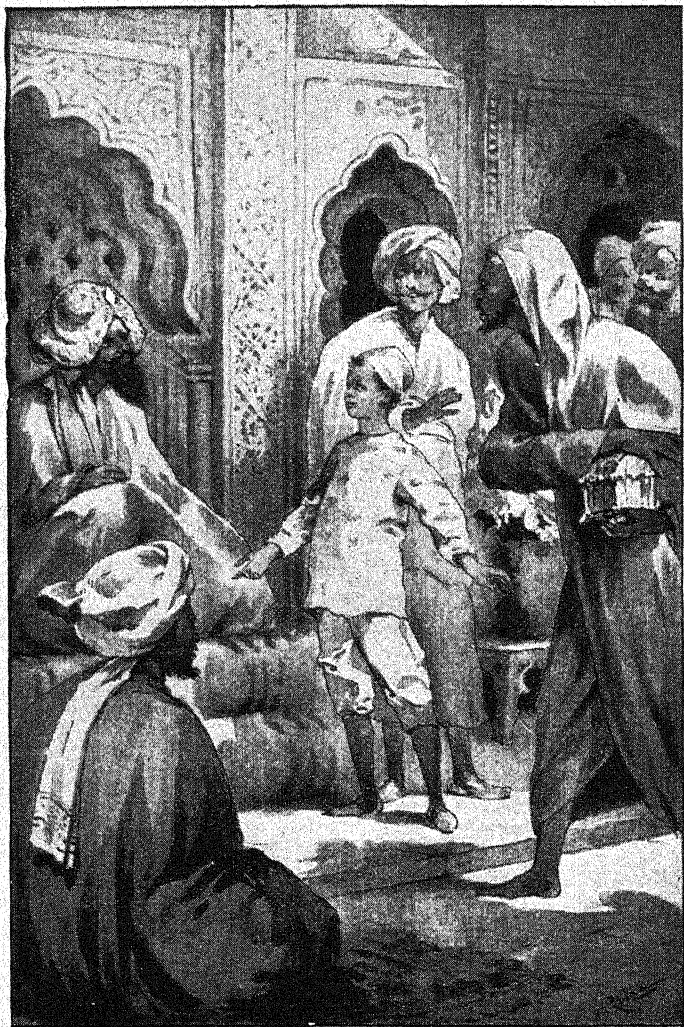
5. THE MERCHANT'S SON.

Mansour, an Egyptian merchant, one day visited the cazi on account of a law-suit, the issue of which troubled him but little, for a private conversation with the judge had given him hopes of the success of his cause. The old man therefore asked his young son Omar to accompany him, in order that he might be early accustomed to deal with the law.

The cazi was seated in the courtyard of the mosque. He was a fat, good-looking man, who spoke little, and this, added to his large turban and his air of perpetual calmness, gave him a great reputation for justice and wisdom. The spectators were numerous. The principal merchants were seated on the ground on carpets, forming a semicircle in front of the magistrate. Mansour took his seat a little way from the judge, and Omar placed himself between the two, his curiosity being strongly excited.

The first case called was that of a young Bania, with loose, flowing robes, who had lately landed from India, and who complained of having been cheated by one of Mansour's comrades in trade.

"Having found a casket of diamonds among the effects left by my father," said he, "I set out for Egypt, to live there on the proceeds of their sale. I was obliged by bad weather to put into Jiddah, where I soon found myself in want of money. I went to the bazaar, and inquired for a dealer in precious stones. The richest, I was told, was Mansour; the most honest, Ali, the jeweller. I applied to Ali.



THE MERCHANT'S SON.

(1,567)

"He welcomed me as a son, as soon as he learned that I had diamonds to sell. He gained my confidence by every kind of attention, and advanced me all the money I needed. One day, after dinner, he examined the diamonds one by one, and said, 'My child, these diamonds are of little value; my coffers are full of such stones. The rocks of the desert furnish them by thousands.'

"To prove the truth of what he said, he opened a box, and, taking therefrom a diamond thrice as large as any of mine, gave it to the slave that was with me. 'What will become of me?' I cried, 'I thought myself rich, and here I am, poor, and a stranger.'

"'My child,' replied Ali, 'leave this casket with me, and I will give you a price for it such as no one else would offer. Choose whatever you wish in Jiddah, and in two hours I will give you an equal weight of what you have chosen, in exchange for your Indian stones.'

"On returning home, I learned that Ali had been deceiving me. What he had given to the slave was nothing but a bit of crystal. I demanded my casket. Ali refused to restore it. Venerable magistrate, my sole hope is in your justice."

It was now Ali's turn to speak. "Illustrious cazi," said he, "it is true that we made a bargain, which I am ready to keep. The rest of the young man's story is false. What matters it what I gave the slave? Did I force the stranger to leave the casket in my hands? Why does he accuse me of treachery?"

"Young man," said the cazi to the Bania, "have you witnesses to prove that Ali deceived you? If not, I shall put the accused on his oath, as the law decrees." A Koran was brought. Ali placed his hand on it, and declared three times that he had not deceived the stranger, and that he was ready to carry out his part of the bargain.

Omar had listened eagerly to all that was said. He now approached the stranger, and asked, "Do you wish me to help you to gain your suit?" "Yes," was the reply; "but you are only a child; you can do nothing." "Have confidence in me for a few moments," said Omar. "Accept Ali's bargain; then let me choose in your stead what you will take in exchange for your diamonds, and fear nothing."

The stranger having agreed to this, Omar bowed to the cazi. "Ali," said he to the jeweller, "you have doubtless brought the casket with you, and can tell the weight thereof." "Here it is," said Ali; "it weighs twenty pounds. Choose what you will. If the thing asked for is in Jiddah, you shall have it within two hours; otherwise the bargain is null and void."

"What we desire," said Omar, raising his voice, "is ants' wings. You have two hours in which to furnish the twenty pounds you have promised us." "This is absurd," cried the jeweller; "it is impossible! I should need half a score of slaves and six months' labour to satisfy so foolish a demand."

"Are there any winged ants in Jiddah?" asked the cazi. "Of course," answered the merchants, laughing. "Our houses are full of them."

"Then Ali must keep his promise, or give back the casket," said the cazi. "This young man was mad to sell his diamonds weight for weight; he is also mad to demand such payment. So much the better for Ali the first time; so much the worse for him the second. Justice has not two weights and measures. Every bargain holds good before the law. Either furnish twenty pounds of ants' wings, or restore the casket to the Bania." "A righteous judgment," shouted the spectators, wonder-struck at such equity.

The casket was at once restored to the stranger, who was now almost beside himself with joy. He took from it three diamonds of the first water and forced them on Omar, who put them in his girdle, and seated himself by his father, his gravity unmoved by the gaze of the assembly.

LEFEBVRE-LABOULAYE.

6. ESCAPE OF ROB ROY.

We continued our march with considerable good order. To ensure the safe custody of the prisoner, the Duke had caused him to be placed on horseback behind one of his retainers, called, as I was informed, Ewan of Brigglands, one of the largest and strongest men who were present. A horse-belt, passed round the bodies of both, and buckled before the yeoman's breast, rendered it impossible for Rob Roy to free himself from his keeper. I was directed to keep close beside them, and accommodated for the purpose with a troop-horse. We were as closely surrounded by the soldiers as the width of the road would permit, and had always at least one, if not two, on each side with pistol in hand. Andrew Fairservice, furnished with a Highland pony of which they had made prey somewhere or other, was permitted to ride among the other domestics, of whom a great number attended the line of march, though without falling into the ranks of the more regularly trained troopers.

In this manner we travelled for a certain distance, until we arrived at a place where we were to cross the river. The Forth, as being the outlet of a lake, is of considerable depth, even where less important in point of width, and the descent to the ford was by a broken, precipitous ravine, which only permitted one horseman to descend at once. The rear and centre of our small body halting on the bank while the front files passed down in succession, produced a considerable delay, as is usual on such occa-

sions, and even some confusion ; for a number of those riders who made no proper part of the squadron crowded to the ford without regularity, and made the militia cavalry, although tolerably well drilled, partake in some degree of their own disorder.

It was while we were thus huddled together on the bank that I heard Rob Roy whisper to the man behind whom he was placed on horseback, "Your father, Ewan, would not have carried an old friend to the shambles like a calf for all the dukes in Christendom."

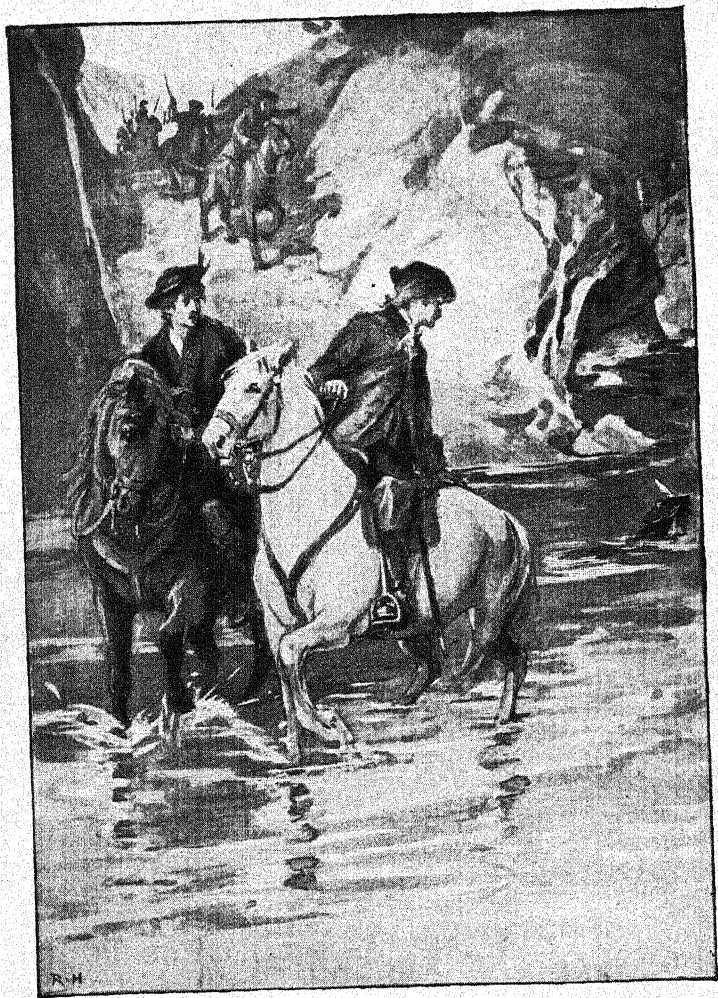
Ewan returned no answer, but shrugged, as one who would express by that sign that what he was doing was none of his own choice.

"And when the Macgregors come down the glen, and you see empty folds, a bloody hearthstone, and the fire flashing out between the rafters of your house, you may be thinking then, Ewan, that were your friend Rob to the fore, you would have had that safe which it will make your heart sore to lose."

Ewan of Brigglands again shrugged and groaned, but remained silent.

"It's a sad thing," continued Rob, sliding his insinuations so gently into Ewan's ear that they reached no other but mine, who certainly saw myself in no shape called upon to destroy his prospects of escape—"it's a sad thing that Ewan of Brigglands, whom Roy Macgregor has helped with hand, sword, and purse, should mind a frown from a great man more than a friend's life."

Ewan seemed sorely agitated, but was silent. We



THE ESCAPE.

heard the Duke's voice from the opposite bank call, "Bring over the prisoner."

Ewan put his horse in motion, and just as I heard Roy say, "Never weigh a Macgregor's blood against a broken thong of leather, for there will be another accounting to give for it both here and hereafter," they passed me hastily, and, dashing forward rather precipitately, entered the water.

"Not yet, sir; not yet," said some of the troopers to me, as I was about to follow, while others pressed forward into the stream.

I saw the Duke on the other side, by the waning light, engaged in commanding his people to get into order, as they landed dispersedly, some higher, some lower. Many had crossed, some were in the water, and the rest were preparing to follow, when a sudden splash warned me that Macgregor's eloquence had prevailed on Ewan to give him freedom and a chance for life. The Duke also heard the sound, and instantly guessed its meaning. "Dog!" he exclaimed to Ewan as he landed, "where is your prisoner?" and without waiting to hear the apology which the terrified vassal began to falter forth, he fired a pistol at his head, whether fatally I know not, and exclaimed, "Gentlemen, disperse, and pursue the villain. A hundred guineas for him that secures Rob Roy!"

All became an instant scene of the most lively confusion. Rob Roy, disengaged from his bonds, doubtless by Ewan's slipping the buckle of his belt, had dropped off at the horse's tail, and instantly dived, passing under the belly of the troop-horse which was

on his left hand. But as he was obliged to come to the surface an instant for air, he drew the attention of the troopers, some of whom plunged into the river with a total disregard to their own safety, sometimes swimming their horses, sometimes losing them and struggling for their own lives. Others, less zealous or more prudent, broke off in different directions, and galloped up and down the banks, to watch the places at which the fugitive might possibly land.

The hollowing, the whooping, the calls for aid at different points, where they saw, or conceived they saw, some vestige of him they were seeking; the frequent report of pistols and carbines, fired at every object which excited the least suspicion; the sight of so many horsemen riding about, in and out of the river, and striking with their long broadswords at whatever excited their attention, joined to the vain exertions used by their officers to restore order and regularity; and all this in so wild a scene, and visible only by the imperfect twilight of an autumn evening, made the most extraordinary hubbub I had hitherto witnessed.

I was left alone to observe it, for our whole cavalcade had dispersed in pursuit, or at least to see the event of the search. Indeed, as I partly suspected at the time, and afterwards learned with certainty, many of those who seemed most active in their attempts to waylay and recover the fugitive were, in actual truth, least desirous that he should be taken, and only joined in the cry to increase the general con-

fusion, and to give Rob Roy a better opportunity of escaping.

Escape, indeed, was not difficult for a swimmer so expert as the freebooter, as soon as he had eluded the first burst of pursuit. At one time he was closely pressed, and several blows were made which flashed in the water around him. Macgregor, however, contrived, when very closely pursued, to disengage himself unobserved from his plaid, and suffer it to float down the stream, where in its progress it quickly attracted general attention. Many of the horsemen were thus put upon a false scent, and several shots or stabs were averted from the party for whom they were designed.

Once fairly out of view, the recovery of the prisoner became almost impossible, since in so many places the river was rendered inaccessible by the steepness of its banks, or the thickets which, overhanging its banks, prevented the approach of horsemen. Errors and accidents had also happened among the pursuers, whose task the approaching night rendered every moment more hopeless. Some got themselves involved in the eddies of the stream, and required the assistance of their companions to save them from drowning. Others, hurt by shots or blows in the confusion, implored help or threatened vengeance, and in one or two instances such accidents led to actual strife.

The trumpets, therefore, sounded the retreat, announcing that the commanding officer had for the present relinquished hopes of the important prize

which had thus unexpectedly escaped his grasp, and the troopers began, slowly, reluctantly, and brawling with each other as they returned, again to assume their ranks. I could see them darkening as they formed on the southern bank of the river, whose murmurs, long drowned by the louder cries of vengeful pursuit, were now heard hoarsely mingling with the deep, discontented, and reproachful voices of the disappointed horsemen.

From "Rob Roy," by SIR WALTER SCOTT.

7. A COMBAT IN THE DESERT.

As the Knight of the Leopard continued to fix his eyes attentively on the yet distant cluster of palm trees, it seemed to him as if some object was moving amongst them and beside them. The distant form separated itself from the trees, which partly hid its motions, and advanced towards the knight with a speed which soon showed a mounted horseman, whom his turban, long spear, and green caftan floating in the wind, on his nearer approach, showed to be a Saracen cavalier.

"In the desert," saith an Eastern proverb, "no man meets a friend." The Crusader was totally indifferent whether the infidel, who now approached on his gallant steed as if borne on the wings of an eagle, came as friend or foe; perhaps, as a vowed champion of the Cross, he might rather have preferred the latter. He disengaged his lance from his saddle, seized it with his right hand, placed it in rest with its point half elevated, gathered up the reins in the left, waked his horse's mettle with the spur, and prepared to encounter the stranger with the calm self-confidence belonging to the victor in many contests.

The Saracen came on at the speedy gallop of an Arab horseman, managing his steed more by his limbs and the inflection of his body than by any use of the reins, which hung loose in his left hand; so that he was enabled to wield the light, round buckler of the skin of the rhinoceros, ornamented with silver loops, which he wore on his arm, swinging

it as if he meant to oppose its slender circle to the formidable thrust of the Western lance. His own long spear was not couched or levelled like that of his antagonist, but grasped by the middle with his right hand, and brandished at arm's length above his head.

As the cavalier approached his enemy at full career, he seemed to expect that the Knight of the Leopard should put his horse to the gallop to encounter him. But the Christian knight, well acquainted with the customs of Eastern warriors, did not mean to exhaust his good horse by any unnecessary exertion; and, on the contrary, made a dead halt, confident that if his enemy advanced to the actual shock, his own weight and that of his powerful charger would give him sufficient advantage, without the additional momentum of rapid motion.

Equally sensible and apprehensive of such a probable result, the Saracen cavalier, when he had approached towards the Christian within twice the length of his lance, wheeled his steed to the left with inimitable dexterity, and rode twice around his antagonist, who, turning without quitting his ground, and presenting his front constantly to his enemy, frustrated his attempts to attack him on an unguarded point; so that the Saracen, wheeling his horse, was fain to retreat to the distance of a hundred yards. A second time, in like manner, the Moor renewed the charge, and a second time was fain to retreat without coming to a close struggle. A third time he



"The Christian knight.....made a dead halt."

approached in the same manner, when the Christian knight, desirous to terminate this illusory warfare, in which he might at length have been worn out by the activity of his foeman, suddenly seized the mace which hung at his saddle-bow, and with a strong hand and unerring aim, hurled it against the head of the Emir—for such and not less his enemy appeared.

The Saracen was just aware of the missile in time to interpose his light buckler betwixt the mace and his head; but the violence of the blow forced the buckler down on his turban, and though that defence also contributed to deaden its violence, the Saracen was beaten from his horse. Ere the Christian could avail himself of this mishap, his nimble foeman sprang from the ground, and calling on his horse, which instantly returned to his side, he leaped into his seat without touching the stirrup, and regained all the advantage of which the Knight of the Leopard hoped to deprive him.

But the latter had in the meanwhile recovered his mace, and the Eastern cavalier, who remembered the strength and dexterity with which he had aimed it, seemed to keep cautiously out of reach of that weapon of which he had so lately felt the force, while he showed his purpose of waging a distant warfare with missile weapons of his own.

Planting his long spear in the sand at a distance from the scene of combat, he strung with great address a short bow which he carried at his back, and putting his horse to the gallop, once more described two or three circles of a wider extent than formerly,

in the course of which he discharged six arrows at the Christian, with such unerring skill that the goodness of his armour alone saved him from being wounded in as many places. The seventh shaft, apparently, found a less perfect part of the armour, and the Christian dropped heavily from his horse.

What was the surprise of the Saracen when, dismounting to examine the condition of his prostrate enemy, he found himself suddenly within the grasp of the European, who had had recourse to this artifice to bring his enemy within his reach! Even in this deadly grapple, the Saracen was saved by his agility and presence of mind. He unloosed the sword-belt in which the Knight of the Leopard had fixed his hold, and thus eluding his fatal grasp, mounted his horse, which seemed to watch his motions with the intelligence of a human being, and again rode off. But in the last encounter the Saracen had lost his sword and his quiver of arrows, both of which were attached to the girdle which he was obliged to abandon. He had also lost his turban in the struggle. These disadvantages seemed to incline the Moslem to a truce: he approached the Christian with his right hand extended, but no longer in a menacing attitude.

"There is truce betwixt our nations," he said, in the *lingua franca* commonly used for the purpose of communication with the Crusaders; "wherefore should there be war betwixt thee and me? Let there be peace betwixt us."

"I am well contented," answered the Crusader;

"but what security dost thou offer that thou wilt observe the truce?"

"The word of a follower of the Prophet was never broken," answered the Emir. "It is thou, brave Christian, from whom I should demand security, did I not know that treason seldom dwells with courage."

The Crusader felt that the confidence of the Moslem made him ashamed of his own doubts.

"By the cross of my sword," he said, laying his hand on the weapon as he spoke, "I will be true companion to thee, Saracen, while our fortune wills that we remain in company together."

"By Mohammed, Prophet of God, and by Allah, God of the Prophet," replied his late foeman, "there is not treachery in my heart towards thee. And now let us go to yonder fountain, for the hour of rest is at hand; and the stream had hardly touched my lip when I was called to battle by thy approach."

The Knight of the Leopard yielded a ready and courteous assent; and the late foes, without an angry look or gesture of doubt, rode side by side to the little cluster of palm trees.

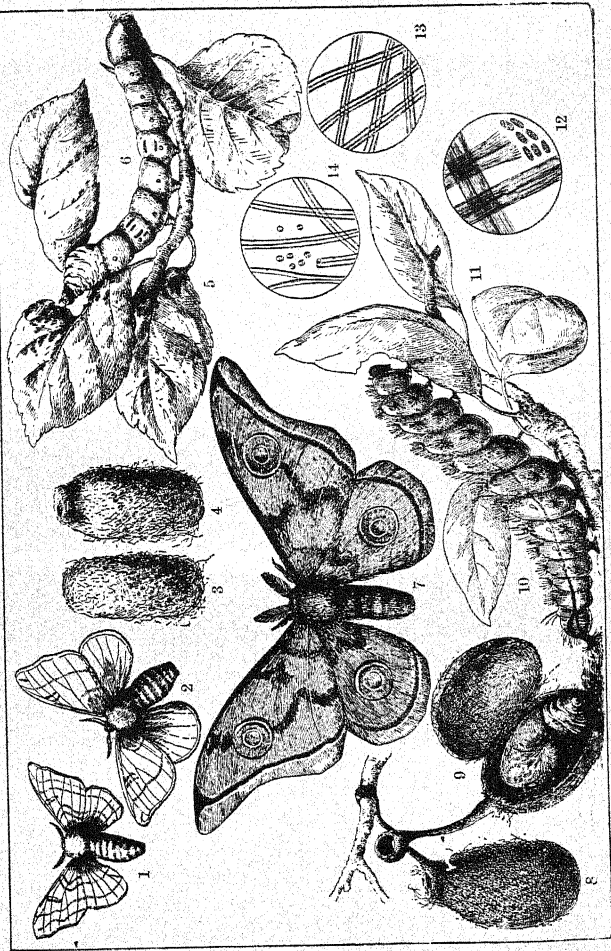
From "The Talisman," by SIR WALTER SCOTT.

8. SILKWORMS.

One of the most interesting points in the manufacture of silk is the mode in which the silkworms are reared. Those who are engaged in this work select a certain number of well-formed cocoons. At the end of fifteen or twenty days, the moths come out of these cocoons. All moths whose wings are expanded at the time of their birth are regarded as useful; whereas those which have crumpled wings and no eyebrows, and which are without down, are considered useless, and are at once destroyed.

After a day or two, the females, each having been placed on a sheet of coarse paper, begin to lay their eggs. In the silk districts of the north of China, owing to the coldness of the climate, pieces of cloth are used instead of sheets of paper. The number of eggs which one moth lays is generally five hundred, and the period required for this is about three days. The moths die almost immediately after they have laid their eggs.

During the autumn and winter months, the eggs are carefully put away on shelves in a large, well-aired room. In spring, each egg hatches out into a tiny black worm scarcely thicker than a hair. Those in charge begin at once to feed the little worms with the leaves of the mulberry-tree, cut into very small pieces with sharp knives, so that the leaves are not bruised nor their juice lost. When the worms are quite young, they are fed every half-hour. By-and-by their meals are reduced to one each hour; and



THE SILKWORM.

1. *Bombyx mori*, male; 2. female. 3 and 4. Cocoons. 5. Mulberry leaf. 6. Larva. 7. Tussur moth. 8. Tussur cocoon. 9. Cocoon opened, showing chrysalis. 10. Larva of the Tussur worm. 11. Food of the Tussur worm. 12. Tussur silk fibres and cross sections. 13. Silk fibres of *B. mori*. 14. Same, with cross sections.

when they have attained to their full growth, they get only three or four meals a day.

Like all other creatures, these young silkworms have their seasons of rest, and to these seasons the Chinese give distinguishing names. The first sleep, which takes place on the fourth or the fifth day after birth, lasts but one day. The second sleep takes place on the eighth or the ninth day, and the third on the fourteenth. The fourth and last sleep takes place about the twenty-second day.

During each period of sleep, the worms cast their skins; and after getting rid of their old skins, they grow very quickly in size and strength. When they have reached the age of thirty-two days, they are full-grown, each being about two inches in length, and almost as thick as a man's little finger. They are then of an amber colour. At this stage they cease to take food, and begin to spin their silk cocoons.

In spinning, they move their head first to the one side and then to the other, and continue this operation until the whole body has been enveloped in a cocoon or case of silk. The time which a worm requires to accomplish this labour is from three to five days; and as soon as it has enclosed itself in the cocoon, it falls into a deep sleep. The attendants then place the bamboo shelves on which the cocoons lie near a slow fire of charcoal or of wood, in order that the chrysalids, as the worms are called at this stage, may be killed by its heat. Otherwise they would, in three weeks more, break from their prison and appear in the form of moths—the last and perfect state of insect life.

The chrysalids having been destroyed, the cocoons are removed from the frames. Women and girls now unwind the cocoons, placing them in boiling water, in order that the silk may come off more easily. These workers must be deft of hand and expert in the business, fully capable of making the threads of equal size, and of producing them bright, clear, and glossy.

When the cocoons are put into boiling water, the outer layer, which is called the silk rind or shell, is first unwound. Another set of women, who are equally expert, are then engaged in unwinding the inner layer of the cocoons, called the silk pulp or flesh. In the course of a day, one woman can unwind five ounces of silk; the most expert workers cannot do more than eight ounces.

From long, white, and shining cocoons a fine and good thread of silk is obtained; from those which are large, dull in colour, and not firm of texture, a coarse thread is produced. This coarse thread is used in making the stuffs with which dresses are lined. When the silk covering is removed, the chrysalids are eaten by the workers, who regard them as excellent food.

In India another kind of silkworm is found, called the eri or castor worm, because it eats the leaves of castor plants and not mulberries. Castor plants are easily grown in India, and so it is easy to rear these worms. The eri worms and moths are much larger and stronger than those of the Chinese; and it is not necessary to kill the chrysalids. The silk from the mulberry cocoons is reeled off, and for this

purpose the insect inside has to be killed first. The silk from eri cocoons cannot be reeled, but has to be spun like cotton, and the full-grown moth is allowed to escape from the cocoon before the spinning begins. Eighty pounds of cocoons, weighed after the moths have come out, will produce about fifty-five pounds of silk thread. This silk is not so fine as that of the Chinese worms, but it is stronger.

9. ABOUT ICEBERGS.

The whole interior of Greenland is covered with an immense ice-cap, many hundred feet in thickness. Even in summer the heat of the sun is powerless to melt this mass, which only freezes into greater solidity when that heat is withdrawn. The immense pressure of the new snowfall of each year helps to turn the lower parts into solid ice.

The great weight of snow also acts as a propelling power, and forces the icy stream down the valleys towards the coast, where it appears as an enormous crystal precipice. At last the front of the glacier is forced into the sea, and into deeper and still deeper water. It begins to feel the action of the waves and tides, which wear away its base, and great cliffs of ice overhang the ocean.

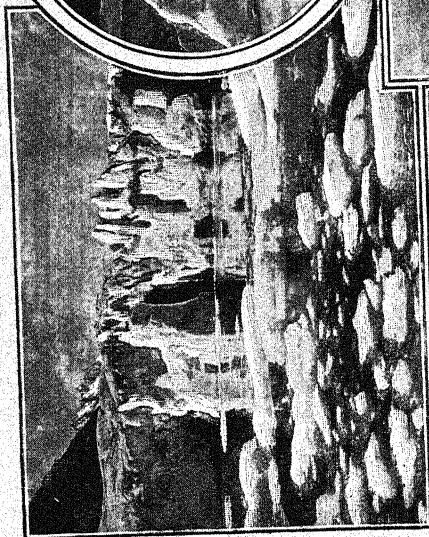
A lofty cliff of ice, thus overhanging the water, begins to show signs of insecurity. Great caverns have been formed in its base, deep fissures are discernible in its surface. Suddenly, with a roar far louder than thunder, the ice-mountain snaps asunder, and the detached mass comes crashing down. A cloud of spray dashes high into the air, and a young iceberg is born. It dives as it touches the waves, rises slowly, sways and tumbles to and fro, but at last finds its balance. Its front is one hundred and fifty feet above the waves; but there is about nine times as much bulk beneath as above the surface.

The berg is scarcely launched into life before it

begins to feel the influence of the great Arctic Current that flows southward through Baffin Bay and Davis Strait. Borne on the bosom of this stream, it starts on its long voyage of six or possibly twelve months. As the berg reaches a warmer climate, the silent rays of the sun and the action of the warmer air begin slowly to take effect: stream-lets trickle down its sides; great crags ever and anon fall from it with a sullen plunge into the ocean.

Soon it becomes top-heavy—it reals and turns over. Rocky fragments embedded in its now up-turned base are exposed to the light. The berg presents a completely new front, and is no longer recognizable as the same towering monster that left the portals of the North months before. It is in a state of unstable equilibrium, and as fragments are broken off it frequently turns over with a hoarse roar. All sailors know how dangerous are icebergs in this condition. They call them “growlers,” and give them a wide berth.

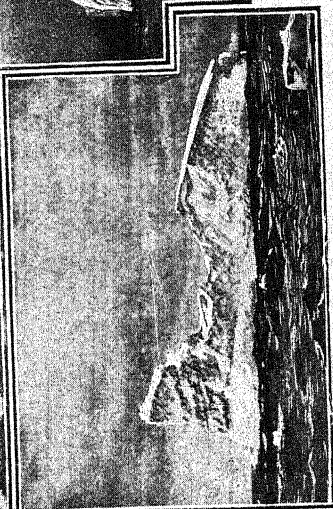
Greatly reduced in size, the berg still holds on its course, and approaches the banks of Newfoundland. Now it enters the warm water of the Gulf Stream, and its dissolution is at hand. Cascades are streaming down its sides; caverns are worn right through its centre; small lakes are formed on its summit; rents and fissures are constantly widening; finally, it falls to pieces with a noise like thunder. Its shattered remains are scattered far and wide, and speedily melt in the warm waters.



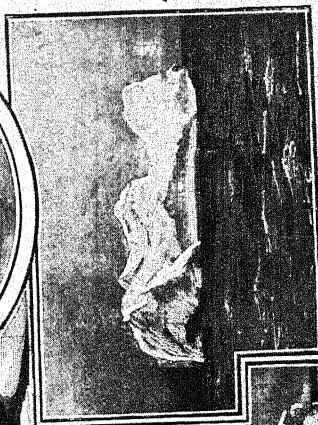
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ICEBERGS.

1. Foot of glacier breaking up into bergs.
2. Foot of glacier in shallow water.
- 3 and 4. Atlantic icebergs.

Such is the life-history of an iceberg. When it reaches a certain stage—when it becomes “rotten,” as the sailors say—it is especially dangerous. Then a slight cause will make it break up into fragments, raising huge billows which might swamp a vessel. The concussion of the air from the firing of a gun, or even the noise made by a steamer, has been known to cause the breaking up of an iceberg.

Sometimes a berg has projections or spurs underneath the water, stretching far out from its base, and a vessel that ventures too near may strike on one of these unseen ice-reefs. In July 1890, a steamer with tourists on board, who were anxious to have a near view of a large berg, approached so close that she struck on one of its projecting spurs. The shock and the weight of the vessel broke off the spur, and at the same time a huge piece of the berg, many hundreds of tons in weight, fell into the water with a fearful roar close behind the steamer. A great wave lifted her stern, and she seemed to be going to the bottom; but the good ship came slowly up, her deck covered with ice fragments, and cataracts of water streaming from her sides. It was an extremely narrow escape.

There are many berg-producing glaciers on the Greenland coast. The largest known was reported by Dr. Kane as extending forty miles along the coast, and presenting a perpendicular front three hundred feet high. This glacier is nine hundred feet thick, and advances at a rate of forty-seven feet a day.

Sir John Ross once saw an iceberg two and one-fifth miles broad, two and one-half miles long, and one hundred and fifty-three feet high. In the southern hemisphere much larger bergs have been seen, towering from seven hundred to eight hundred feet above the waves. It must not be forgotten that in estimating the size of an iceberg, the visible portion is only one-tenth part of the whole mass.

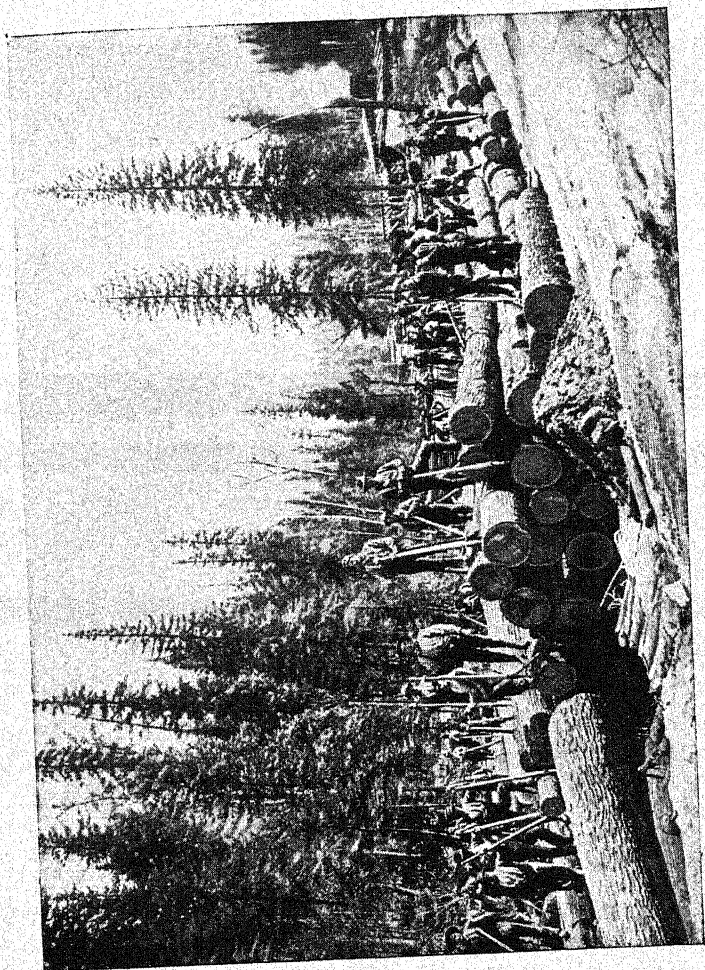


10. A LUMBER CAMP.

There is no summer in a Canadian lumber camp; at any rate, there is nobody in the camp in summer, which amounts to the same thing. The season of activity in the camps, or the "shanties" as they are generally called, extends from late September to early April. Let us follow a gang that is going to a forest still untouched by the axe, far up the Black River, a tributary of the Ottawa, a hundred miles or more from the nearest village. This gang consists of about forty men, including the foreman, clerk, carpenter, cook, and chore-boy, all active, sturdy, and good-natured fellows.

Scouts have previously selected the best site for the camp. On arriving, the first thing done by the gang is to build the shanty, which is to be their home during the long, cold winter. This is the way they go about it:—First of all, a number of trees are cut down. The trunks, cleared of all their branches and roughly squared, are sawed into the proper lengths, and are then laid one upon another until an enclosure is made, with walls eight feet high. Upon the top of these walls strong beams are laid, which are supported in the centre by four great pillars. Then comes the roof.

A floor of roughly-flattened timbers having been laid, and a door cut, it only remains to construct the fireplace and the bunks. A bank of sand about two feet deep and six feet square makes the hearth. Over it extend the two wooden cranes that support the



LUMBERING IN CANADA.

capacious kettles. A mighty fire roars and crackles unceasingly upon the hearth, its smoke escaping through a square hole in the roof—a hole so big that one may lie in the bunks and study the stars. The bunks are sloping platforms about seven feet in length, running along three sides of the room.

The forty men are divided according to the nature of their work. The clerk, cook, and chore-boy are the "home-guard." The others, according to their various abilities, are choppers, road-cutters, teamsters, sawyers, and chainers. The only duty requiring explanation is that of chore-boy. He is the cook's assistant and general servant of the shanty. He has to chop the firewood, draw the water, wash the dishes, and perform a multitude of such odd jobs, in return for which he is apt to get little thanks and much abuse.

The choppers have the most important and interesting part of the work. They always work in pairs, and go out armed with a keen axe apiece and a cross-cut saw between them. Having selected their victim—say a splendid pine, towering more than a hundred feet in the air—they take up their position at opposite sides of it. Soon the strokes of the axes ring out in quick succession. For some time the yellow chips fly fast, and presently a shiver runs through the tree's mighty frame. One of the choppers cries warningly to the other, who hastens to get out of the way. A few more strokes are given with nice skill. Then comes a rending crack, and the stately tree, after quivering a moment as if uncertain which way to fall, crashes to the ground.

The shantyman leads a free, hearty, healthy life. From dawn until dark he works in the open air, exercising lungs and muscles. His fare is substantial in quality and unlimited in quantity. When the day's work is over, and he trudges home to the shanty, he finds the warm welcome of a steaming supper awaiting him, and huge loaves of bread baked in great iron pots buried deep in the ashes of the fire-place.

After supper, the shantyman has an hour or more before bed-time. The French-Canadians are especially fond of singing, and many of their songs are full of spirit and beauty. By nine o'clock, at the latest, all have "turned in." The process of going to bed consists simply in taking off one's coat and boots, and rolling up snugly in a couple of thick blankets. In the dusk of early morning the foreman's loud voice is heard calling to the men, "Turn out now, and get your breakfast!" The lumberman has been asleep ten good hours, but he feels as if he had just lain down!

J. M. OXLEY.

II. NATIVE SPORTS IN HAWAII.

The Pacific Islanders are the most expert of all nations in swimming and in aquatic games. In all the tropical groups nearly the entire population lives upon the seashore. The climate is warm; the people have little to do; and on windy days, when the billows roll in heavily from the ocean, whole villages sometimes spend an afternoon in the daring pastime of surf-playing.

The Hawaiian practises this sport upon a surf-board, which he calls a "wave-sliding board." It is made of firm, light wood; it is equal in length to the swimmer's height, about a foot wide, slightly oval in outline, and often convex on both sides. It is polished and stained black, and it is preserved with great care.

The natives choose a spot where immense billows, driven in by the trade-winds, break furiously upon the coast. Each person, taking his swimming-board under him, plunges into the surf, and strikes out for the deep water half a mile or more from the shore. Arrived at last at the outside of the reef, where the waves first begin to break, he turns, extends himself at full length upon his board, faces the shore, and throws quick glances behind him, watching for a larger wave than usual to ride upon.

Three or four waves pass, but he laughs at them, though the smallest of them would have dashed over a foreign swimmer and drowned him. At last he sees a mighty billow approaching him. It is the

very king of waves. It comes with its crest high in the air, its liquid edge already trembling and snapping in the sunlight, and it utters a hollow roar as it sweeps down upon the swimmer. It draws him backward for an instant toward it, as if to swallow him; then snatching him up in its course, it hurls him with inconceivable speed toward the shore. He lies upon his board on the front surface of the wave; his head is down, his heels slant upward into the flashing foam which half envelops him. A score of his companions are dashing madly onward with him: they shout more loudly than the roaring of the wave.

You look to see the swimmer dashed against the shore. He is going with the speed of a racer—there seems no escape for him—when suddenly he disappears from sight. By a backward movement of the hands he retreats into the heart of the wave, sinking away from its front surface. Soon he reappears on the seaward side of the breaker that now shatters itself upon the lava-rock. His head is already turned from the shore, and he is again making his way into deep water to mount another billow.

The children have a number of games at which they play, in and under the water, as fearlessly as school children gambol in the playground. One is a game in which the object of the side that is "in" is to reach two or three successive stations by swimming and diving, so as to escape being touched by any player of the "out" party, who are the pursuers.

Leaping from high, perpendicular cliffs is a favourite
(1,567)

and daring sport with the men. They choose a place where the water is not less than fifteen or twenty feet in depth at the foot of the cliff; then, taking a rousing run to get fairly under way, they bound far into the air from the edge of the cliff.

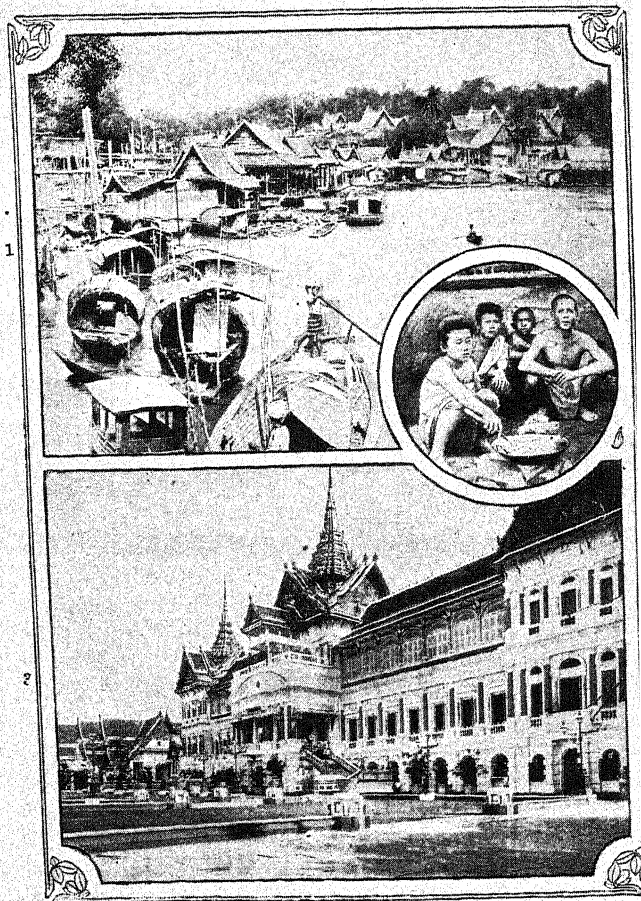
As the diver falls from the dizzy height—sometimes a hundred feet—toward the water, he bends himself almost double; but just before striking the water, he partially straightens himself, so that his whole body is slightly curved forward at the moment of the plunge, and the feet are a little in advance of a perpendicular line from the head. He strikes the water without a splash, entering it with that quick, dull sound that a smooth pebble makes when thrown forcibly into water, and at an angle so nicely calculated that he is actually brought to the surface again by the momentum of the fall. He shoots through the arc of a circle under the water, and after two or three seconds comes up, feet foremost. The first thing you see of him is his toes, emerging from the water fifteen or twenty feet in front of the place where he went under. No athletic feat is more daring and beautiful than this.

12. THE LAND OF THE WHITE ELEPHANT.

Fifty years ago, we knew very little of the kingdom of Siam, beyond the fact that the people worshipped white elephants. But English civilization made its way through India to Burmah, and opened the closely-sealed ports of Siam and Cochin China. A late King of Siam chose an Englishman for one of his counsellors. His successor not only opened his kingdom for English education, but encouraged the schools by royal gifts and favour.

Siam has not the tropical heat of India. The climate is delicious. The Bay of Bengal on the one side, and the Gulf of Siam on the other, keep this kingdom refreshed with sea-breezes. Bangkok, the capital, built out into the river Menam, is called the "Venice of the East." Indeed, it is even more of a water city than the "Queen of the Adriatic;" for while Venice has its foundations on solid ground, Bangkok actually floats on the water. Huge bamboo rafts are constructed, and on these houses, shops, and even gardens are built.

We chanced to arrive at Bangkok on a feast-day. It was evening when we came round a bend in the river and caught sight of the floating city. A marvellous panorama, an illuminated world, seemed spread out before us. Thousands of fire-globes shed their brilliant light over the broad bosom of the water; and on either side, as far as the eye could reach, there was an endless succession of lights of every imaginable colour and shape.



SCENES IN SIAM.

1. Native houses and boats, Ayuthia. 2. Natives. 3. Grand Palace, Bangkok.
(Photos supplied by the Exclusive News Agency.)

Every house was decorated with lanterns; the yards and masts of every ship—even the tiniest boat—sparkled with brilliant coloured fire; while the more distant pagodas and palaces were a blaze of glory. It was the great annual festival of Siam, the Feast of Lanterns; and had we arrived one day later we should have missed this fairy-land spectacle.

The temples, of which there are one hundred, are built on the river-bank. Here also stand the king's palaces, the houses of the foreign consuls, and the residences of the nobility. At one time the capital of Siam stood on the river-bank some distance above the position of the present capital; but the annual overflow of the river caused such a deposit of mud that the place became very unhealthy, and a new town was built farther down the river.

The floating houses have no communication with each other by land; all travelling is done by boat. Almost every conceivable commodity is borne in these little boats—rice, fish, fruit, and flowers—and every sort of handicraft is carried on in them. Here you may see a Chinaman manufacturing rich soup over a hissing kettle, and delivering it to his customers; another person is baking bread; another, under a gaily-stripped awning, is weaving gold thread into embroidery, while a mite of a child manages the little boat. The scenes in the water streets are always new and interesting.

The religion of Siam is a form of Buddhism. The reverence with which the Siamese regard the white elephant is not difficult to understand, when



IN A BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

we remember that the white elephants are supposed to be the abodes of the souls of their dead kings. One of the most splendid temples near the city is set apart for the royal white elephant. It stands in a garden of palms, and at the time of my visit to it, a dozen priests, dressed in yellow robes, were in attendance on the great white animal. He stood lazily waving his trunk, and helping himself to leaves and branches from the heaps placed before him.

His room was lofty; the floor was covered with a mat of pure, chased gold, each interwoven plait being about half an inch broad. On this costly carpet the unwieldy animal stood and stamped his great feet, with no more care for its magnificence than if it had been his native turf. Several priests were constantly engaged in cleaning the floor and in piling up fresh herbage for his majesty to feast on. Goldsmiths were taking the worn strips out of the golden carpet, and replacing them with new, shining ones.

The man who was so fortunate as to entrap this sacred animal was rewarded with a hereditary pension, and was raised to a very high office in the kingdom—that of water-carrier to the elephant. The jars in which the water is carried, and the trough from which the sacred animal drinks, are of pure gold.

13. THE OVERLAND ROUTE.

The idea of reaching India by the Mediterranean, the Isthmus of Suez, and the Red Sea, and thus saving the time spent in doubling the Cape, first occurred to a man named Thomas Waghorn. In 1827 he was appointed by the directors of the East India Company to report on the navigation of the Red Sea, and to convey certain dispatches by this route to Bombay.

He got notice of this mission on the 24th of October, and was desired to be at Suez by the 8th of December, in order to catch the steamer *Enterprise*, and proceed in her to India. He took only four days to make ready for the journey, and on the 28th of October left London for Dover on the "Eagle" stage-coach. He then crossed the English Channel in a packet-boat, and proceeded to make his way, as rapidly as possible, *over land* to a Mediterranean port, from which he could get a vessel to carry him to Egypt.

Circumstances were against him. Bridges broke down; falling avalanches had to be avoided; an accident disabled the steamer in which he was to sail. In spite of all, he dashed through five kingdoms, and reached Trieste in nine days, or little more than half the time then taken by the mails for the same journey.

An Austrian brig had left for Alexandria the night before; but the breeze had fallen, and she was still to be seen from the hill-tops. A carriage was obtained, and off went Waghorn along the coast in chase of the vessel, hoping to make up to her at

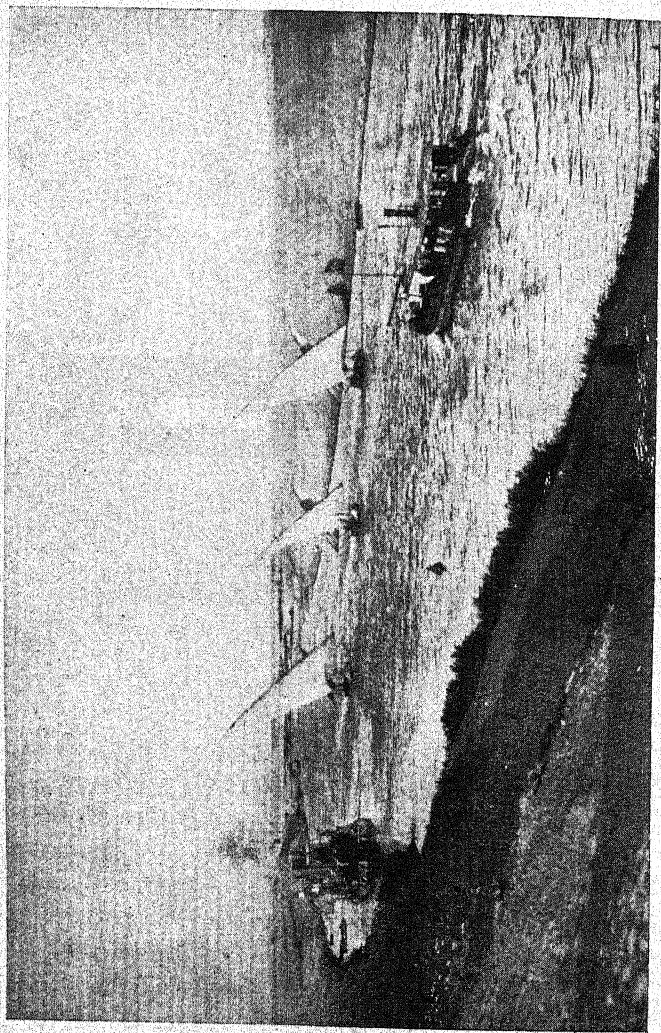
a village twenty miles down the Gulf of Venice. Every hour he gained on her; he began to make out her hull, her sails, and her rigging. He urged on the post-boys with redoubled vehemence; he kept them going at a furious rate.

He was within three miles of the vessel; another half-hour would see him safe on board, and then—hurrah for India! But suddenly a strong northerly wind sprang up; the sails of the brig swelled out before it, and poor Waghorn, with his panting, jaded horses, was left far behind. The chase was hopeless now, so he went back to Trieste, exhausted with fatigue and disappointment.

Two days afterwards, he sailed from Venice on board a Spanish ship. After a voyage of sixteen days, he arrived at Alexandria, where he hired donkeys to take him to Rosetta. In spite of many delays, he succeeded in crossing the desert in time to keep his appointment at Suez on the 8th of December.

But there was no sign of the steamer. After waiting two days, with feverish impatience, Mr. Waghorn determined to sail down the Red Sea in the hope of meeting her. The people of the district held up their hands in horror at the purpose of the mad Englishman, and tried to dissuade him; but Waghorn could not rest. He was commissioned to inquire into the navigability of these waters, and he would do so in an open boat if necessary; and so he did.

In six and a half days he arrived at Jiddah—six hundred and twenty miles from Suez—and anchored his boat close to one of the East India Company's



ARAB DHOWS IN THE SUEZ CANAL.

cruisers, the *Benares*. On going on board to learn the news, he was told by the captain that the *Enterprise* was not coming at all. This intelligence seems to have felled him like a blow, and he was immediately seized with a delirious fever. It was six weeks before he could proceed to Bombay, where he arrived on the 21st of March. In spite of all the drawbacks in his way, he had accomplished the journey in four months and twenty-one days, which was a very short time for such a journey in those days.

During the next twelve years, Waghorn devoted himself to the establishment of the Overland Route. He provided English carriages, vans, and horses for the conveyance of the passengers across the Egyptian desert, placed small steamers on the Nile and Alexandria Canal, built eight halting-places between Cairo and Suez; and he "converted the wandering robbers into faithful guides, so that even ladies and children could cross and re-cross the desert in security."

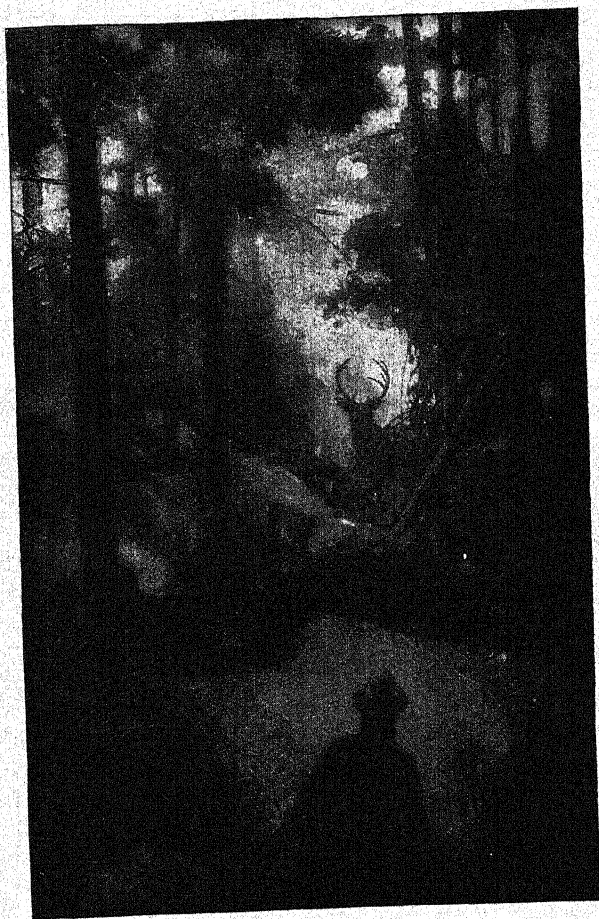
What a change has taken place in the journey to the East by the Overland Route since the days of Waghorn! Having crossed by steamer from Dover to Calais, the traveller is swiftly borne by train to the French port of Marseilles, or, further still, through the Alps to Brindisi, near "the heel of the boot" formed by the south of Italy. This ends the overland part of the journey, for he has next to join the powerful steamer which will bear him across the Mediterranean to Port Said, through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to Aden, and then across the Indian Ocean to India, Ceylon, Singapore, China, or to Australia.

14. USES OF FORESTS.

The greater part of the land surface of the earth is thickly covered with growing plants. The influence of this plant covering is very important in many ways. The most immediate effect produced by trees is the improvement of the soil into which their roots penetrate. Wherever they succeed in finding a foothold, they at once proceed to make and to preserve a coating of soil, which in the end may become fit for cultivation.

The roots penetrate downward into crevices of the rock, starting as slender filaments which grow in size and wedge the stones apart, and thus make the beginning of a soil. Into every cranny of the disrupted stone other roots find their way, and repeat the process of breaking. In this way the rock is fractured into bits, and becomes subjected to the dissolving action of the rain-water, and so affords food for plants. The root-hairs, also, produce an acid capable of dissolving certain mineral substances, and this acid helps to decompose the particles of stone. In this way the rootlets of plants serve in part to make from the solid rocks the soil that gives them support.

Not only do trees help to make the soil upon which they live, but they also preserve it from destruction. In a time of heavy rain, the soil is rapidly borne away to the rivers, and thence to the sea, in the form of mud. In countries where the soil has long been tilled, it constantly diminishes in depth; and unless great



IN A CANADIAN FOREST.

care is taken, in a few centuries it all passes away into the streams, except where the surface is very level. Thus in Italy, and in many of the countries that have long been cultivated, the soil on the steeper slopes, which once were fertile, has so far disappeared that many extensive districts are now barren wastes.

Forests serve not only to prevent the wasting of the soil under the pelting influence of the rain, but they also greatly restrain the action of even the largest rivers. Willows, poplars, and other water-loving plants thrive along the banks of a stream, send their roots downward beneath the surface, and so make a strong net-work which resists the cutting action of the river, and keeps it within narrow bounds.

Forests also help to prevent floods. If the rain falls on an unforested country, the water flows quickly over the bare surface to the brooks, and thence to the larger rivers, on its way to the sea. When, however, the rain falls on forests, the water enters a thick, spongy layer, composed of partly-decayed leaves, together with fallen trunks and branches of trees. Through this sponge the water moves but slowly on its way to the streams, and when it is actually in the brooks, its progress downward is retarded by numerous dams made of fallen timber and drift-wood. The result is that instead of pouring swiftly to the sea, the flood waters creep slowly away, requiring weeks in place of hours for their journey to the greater rivers.

There is another effect which forests have upon

the soil. The strong roots of trees, penetrating far down into the subsoil and into the crevices of the rocks, draw upward and build into their trunks the solid matter which we find in the ash of burnt wood. The trees also gather a large part of their substance from the atmosphere. All the material which goes into the air when wood is burnt came from the air during the growth of the plant. When the tree dies, or when its leaves and branches fall, this mixture of decayed vegetable matter is mixed with the soil, and serves to increase its fertility. The farmer has to imitate the natural process which goes on in the forest, and introduce similar substances into the soil in order to maintain its productiveness.

From the forests we derive the timber which constitutes a large part of our houses, and which is also necessary for the construction of our agricultural machinery, of part of our ships, and of a host of other structures which are essential to the well-being of man.

Although mineral coal has, in the more civilized parts of the world, to a great extent taken the place of wood for heating purposes, probably three-fourths of the domestic hearths in the world are still supplied from the forests. It is to be hoped that the use of coal will become yet more extensive, and so diminish the tax which is laid upon the woods, and spare them for more necessary uses.

Last of all, we may note the elements of beauty which are afforded by our woods. One accustomed to dwell within a short distance of a great forest has

probably never realized how important are these elements in the landscape. If he dwells for a while on plains where trees are found only near the larger streams, and there, indeed, in scanty growth, he will soon come to recognize how much of his enjoyment of natural beauty is derived from the presence of forests.



THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON.

(From the fresco in the Royal Exchange, London, by Stanhope A. Forbes, R.A.)
(1,567)

15. THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON.

2nd September 1666.—This fatal night, about ten, began that deplorable fire, near Fish Street, in London. *3rd.*—The fire continuing, after dinner I took coach with my wife and son, and went to the Bankside, in Southwark, where we beheld that dismal spectacle, the whole city in dreadful flames near the water-side.

The fire went on all the night—if I may call that night which was as light as day for ten miles round about—helped by a fierce eastern wind in a very dry season. I saw the whole south part of the city burning from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornhill (for it kindled back against the wind as well as forward), Tower Street, Fenchurch Street, Gracechurch Street, and so along to Bainsard's Castle; and the fire there was now taking hold of St. Paul's Church.

The conflagration was so universal, and the people were so astonished, that from the beginning they hardly stirred to check it. There was nothing heard or seen but crying out and lamentation, the people running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save their goods. There was a strange consternation upon them, as the fire consumed churches, public halls, hospitals, monuments, and ornaments, leaping from house to house, and street to street, at great distances one from the other.

We saw the Thames covered with goods afloat, all the barges and boats being laden with what some

persons had had time and courage to save. Carts, also, were on all sides carrying things out to the fields, which for many miles were strewed with movables of all sorts; tents were erected to shelter both people and what goods they could get away.

Oh the miserable and calamitous spectacle! All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, the light being seen above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant that my eyes may never behold the like—above ten thousand houses all in one flame! The noise and crackling and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, and houses, and churches, were like a hideous storm.

The air all about was so hot that at last one was not able to approach the fire. Men were forced to stand still and let the flames burn on, which they did for nearly two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds of smoke were dismal, and reached nearly fifty miles in length. Thus I left it this afternoon. London was, but is no more!

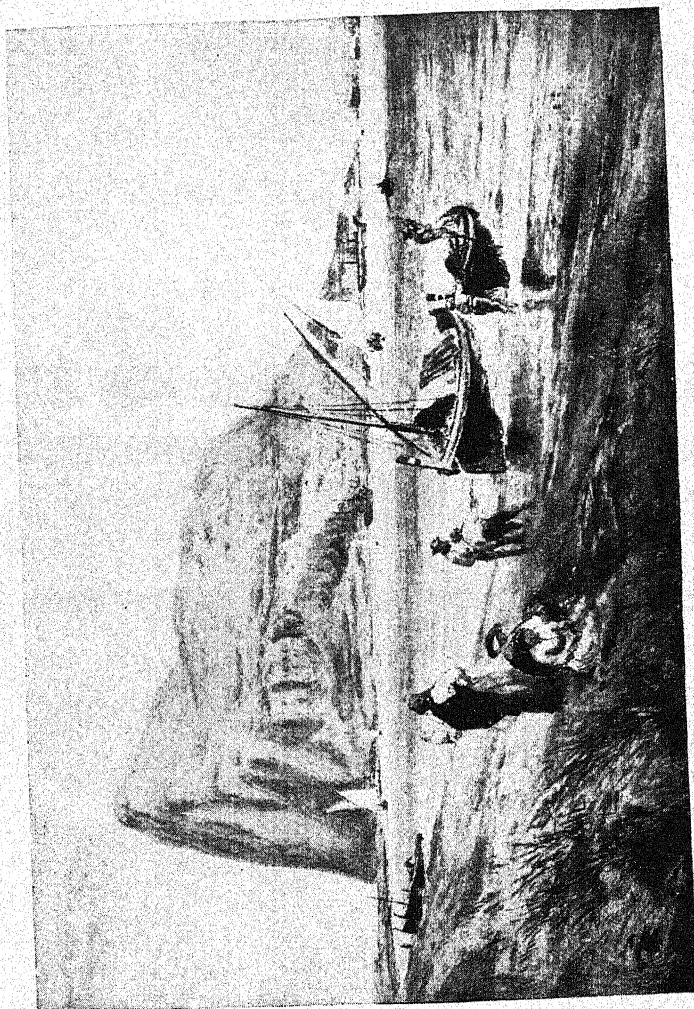
4th.—The burning still rages, and it has now got as far as the Inner Temple. All Fleet Street, the Old Bailey, Ludgate Hill, Warwick Lane, Newgate, Paul's Chain, and Watling Street are now flaming. The stones of St. Paul's have been falling on all sides, the melting lead of the roof running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with fiery redness, so that no horse or man is able to tread on them. The eastern wind still more impetuously drives the flames forward.

5th.—Men now began to bestir themselves, and not to stand dismayed, as they had done hitherto. It was seen that nothing was likely to put a stop to the fire but the blowing up of as many houses as would make a wider gap than any which had yet been made by the ordinary method of pulling them down. Some stout seamen had proposed this early enough to have saved nearly the whole city; but some avaricious men would not permit it, because their houses must have been among the first destroyed. This was now commanded to be done; and as the wind also abated, the people seemed to take spirit again.

The poor inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields and Moorfields, as far as Highgate, and for several miles round. Some lived under tents, some under miserable huts and hovels. Many were without a rag or any necessary utensils, bed, or board, and were now reduced from riches and ease to extremest misery and poverty.

7th.—I went this morning on foot from Whitehall as far as London Bridge, clambering over heaps of still smoking rubbish. The ground under my feet was so hot that it burnt the soles of my shoes. The people who walked about the ruins appeared like men in a desert, or rather in some great city laid waste by a cruel enemy.

Abridged from the Diary of JOHN EVELYN (1620-1706).



THE ROCK OF GIBRAITAR.

16. THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR, 1782.

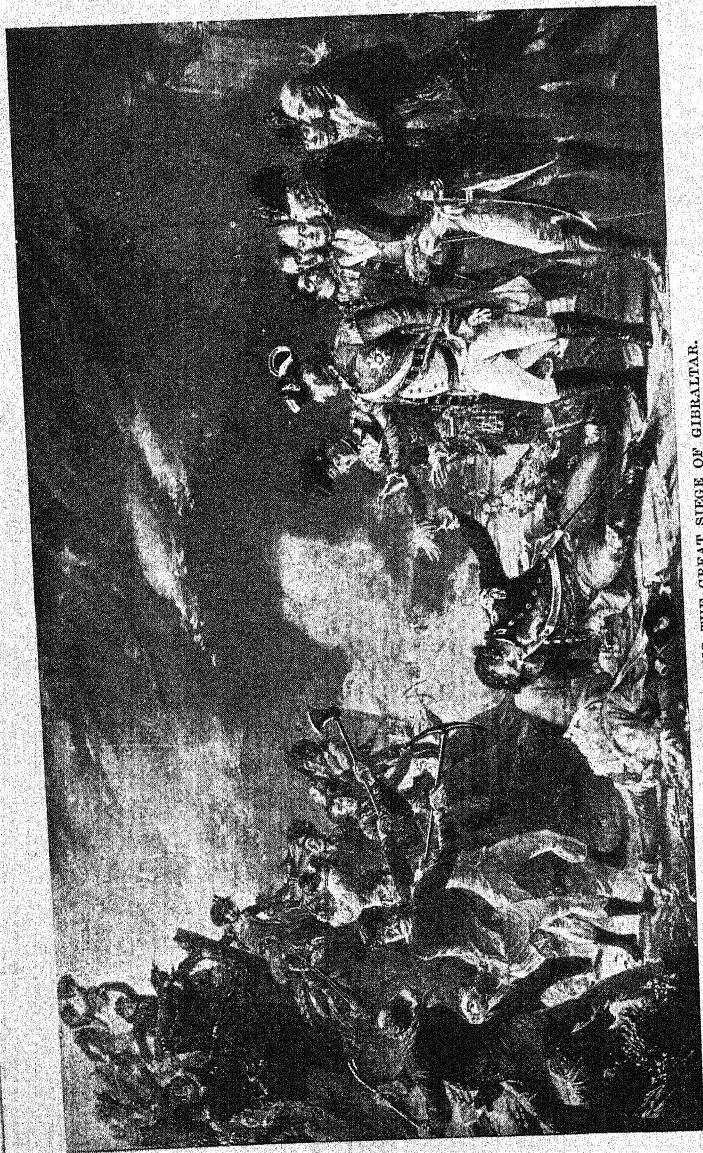
In 1779 the fortress of Gibraltar, situate on a high rock, and in a position excellently calculated for the support of the English fleets and trade in the Mediterranean, was attacked by the Spaniards, from whom it had been captured by Sir George Rooke in 1704. General Eliot had the command of the British, whose garrison was rather more than five thousand, and he performed his duty admirably. The operations of the Spaniards were at first confined to a blockade, with the purpose of preventing supplies of provisions being brought in. They succeeded in raising the price of food within the town. Veal, mutton, and beef were eight times as dear as usual, fowls were eighteen shillings a couple, ducks a guinea, and other things in proportion; but in January 1780 Admiral Rodney gained two victories over the Spanish fleets, and relieved the garrison.

As soon as Rodney departed, the blockade was renewed, and on the night of June 6 an attempt was made to set fire to the storehouses and shipping by sending ten fire-ships into the bay. The design, however, was frustrated by the courage and fortitude of the British seamen, who manned their boats, grappled the fire-ships, and towed them out of reach of the vessels. The greatest annoyance which the garrison suffered was from the Spanish gunboats, carrying 26-pounders, and manned by forty or fifty men, with fifteen oars on a side.

The blockade was successfully continued, and the

garrison cut off from supplies they had derived from Africa, and from vegetables planted in a small plot of ground called the neutral ground, between the Spanish territory and the range of the batteries of Gibraltar. The constant use of salted provisions caused a complaint called the scurvy, by which wounds and fractures of bones were opened afresh, and many a stout fellow was rendered useless. Some remedy, however, was obtained for these miseries by the seizing of a small vessel laden with oranges and lemons. In the middle of February 1781, the bakers left off work for want of flour, and the salted food was dealt out from the public stores in diminished quantity. In April, another relief came from England, and after great difficulties from the enemy's gun-boats, which were too small to be well shot at, too numerous to be neglected, and too active to be overtaken, the supply was thrown into the town.

The Spanish Government, irritated at these reliefs, determined on an active assault; and this began by a general bombardment which lasted three weeks, and during which from four to five thousand shots and shells were thrown into the fortress every twenty-four hours. The buildings were much shattered, and as the accommodation of the garrison was of greater consequence than that of the townsmen, these were reduced to distress. Such, therefore, as chose to go were sent away. By-and-by this bombardment was relaxed, but did not cease, and on November 27 the garrison, in a sally, destroyed the enemy's works, blew up their magazines, and spiked their guns.



A SORTIE DURING THE GREAT SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR.
(From the picture by Turner.)

General Eliot is seen on the right, surrounded by his officers; on the left British soldiers are destroying Spanish works. The wounded man in the middle of the picture is a Spanish officer.

The determined spirit of the Spaniards was now thoroughly aroused, and they prepared an attack more terrible than any that had yet been made. Two princes of the blood royal of France came to watch the extraordinary display, and brought considerable assistance in engineers and troops. Floating batteries were made by cutting down the upper works of men-of-war and frigates, and furnishing them with means of putting out any fire. They were constructed bomb-proof, and their decks were provided with a pent-house, from which the shot should roll off into the water, and fortified on the larboard side with green timber, six or seven feet thick, and with raw hides. Ten of these batteries were ready, and to aid their efforts eighty gunboats, carrying heavy cannon for the discharge of shot, and mortars for throwing shells; and forty-seven vessels of war also were to join in the attack.

Eliot, in the meanwhile, had accustomed his men to serve the guns with rapidity and precision. He had provided means for cooling them, as the frequent discharges heated them too much, and had numerous furnaces ready to make the balls red-hot, with barrows full of sand to carry them to the batteries, and everything was arranged beforehand. On the morning of September 13, 1782, the floating batteries were brought within range, and for two hours the whole of the Spanish and French forces, consisting of forty thousand men, and with one thousand pieces of cannon, were firing and bombarding in all directions, while the English returned it with

equal activity; but the heaviest shells rebounded from the tops of these formidable batteries, and 32-pound shot seemed to make no impression on their hulls.

The red-hot shot began to be used about noon. About two o'clock the admiral's battering-ship began to smoke on the side exposed to the garrison, and his second also was in the same condition. At eight the Spanish fire had almost ceased; they then threw up rockets as signals of distress. About an hour after midnight, the ship that first smoked burst into flames. The light was equal to that of noonday, and the British artillery were able to point their guns with the utmost precision. Between three and four, six others were on fire; six blew up, three burnt to the water's edge, the powder in their magazines having been wetted, and one was afterwards burnt by the English. This success was due to the red-hot shot.

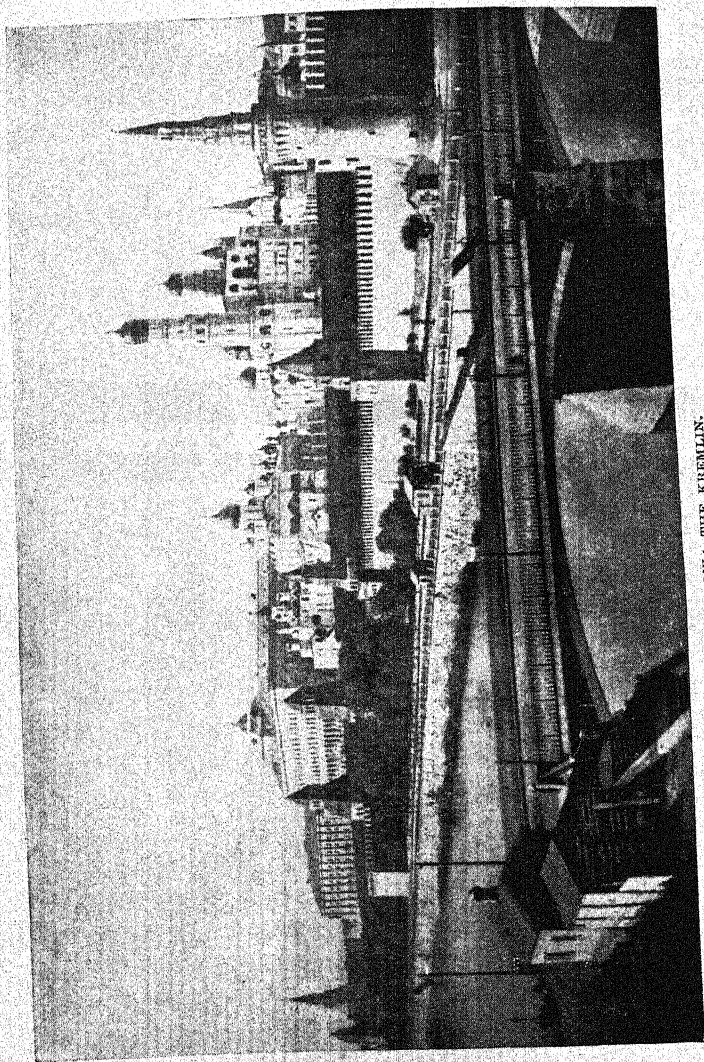
The attack totally failed; the enemy no longer offered to proceed by force; the garrison was relieved again by a British fleet; and at the treaty of peace in 1783 this valuable fortress remained in the hands of the British. General Eliot was made Lord Heathfield; his portrait is in the National Gallery, and represents him as holding the keys of Gibraltar in his hand.

From the Fourth Book of the Christian Knowledge Society.

17. THE BURNING OF MOSCOW, 1812.

Buonaparte, by the greatest exertions, and at all risks, had forced his army on towards Moscow, and on September 14, 1812, he stood on a neighbouring hill and saw the city, the ancient capital of the Russian Empire, before him, exclaiming, as he thought of the state of his army, "It was high time." He waited, expecting a deputation from the inhabitants; but the whole population of three hundred thousand persons had deserted their homes, and left him a desolation. This astonished him. He hoped, however, that it would afford quarters and rest for his army during the miseries of a Northern winter.

He entered the town late that day. The same night the bazaar was found on fire; blame was laid on the French soldiers, who were supposed to have done it in drunkenness. Next day, by the activity of the Duke of Treviso and the troops, the flames were subdued. The next night, Ségur tells us that he was awaked, as he slept near the person of Napoleon, in the imperial palace, the Kremlin, by the light of fire, and saw with anxiety that the flames arose just in such a quarter that the wind blew them towards the Kremlin. The wind changed, and he, contented with his own relief, slept again; but he was again awaked, and found the flames springing up in a new quarter, so that the wind blew them again upon the palace. Three times that night did the wind change from north to west, and three times the flames broke out so as to drive directly on the Kremlin.



MOSCOW: THE KREMLIN.

The next day officers arrived from all quarters, and all their accounts agreed. The very first night the French entered Moscow, between the fourteenth and fifteenth of September, a fire-balloon was seen to settle on the palace of a Russian prince, and consumed it. This had been the signal. Fire was then immediately set to the Exchange, and Russian police soldiers were seen stirring up the flames with tarred lances.

Bombshells were placed in the stoves of houses, and when the French crowded round for warmth, exploded and wounded them. Perhaps they retired and sought fresh quarters; but as they were on the point of entering some house, shut up and uninhabited, faint explosions were heard, followed by a light smoke, which gradually became thick and black, and then reddish, till presently the whole edifice was involved in flames. All had seen hideous-looking men and women covered with rags wandering among the flames. These wretches, intoxicated with wine and success, were no longer at the pains to conceal themselves, but proceeded in triumph through the blazing streets. It was said that they had been released from prison, by the Russian generals, for the purpose of burning Moscow.

The danger of losing their winter shelter was now serious to the French. Orders were issued immediately to shoot all incendiaries on the spot. The imperial guard was under arms in the Kremlin, and the whole army was on foot. While the troops were yet struggling with the conflagration, and the



army was disputing their prey with the flames, Napoleon, whose sleep no one dared to disturb during the night, was awoke by the light of day and of the fire.

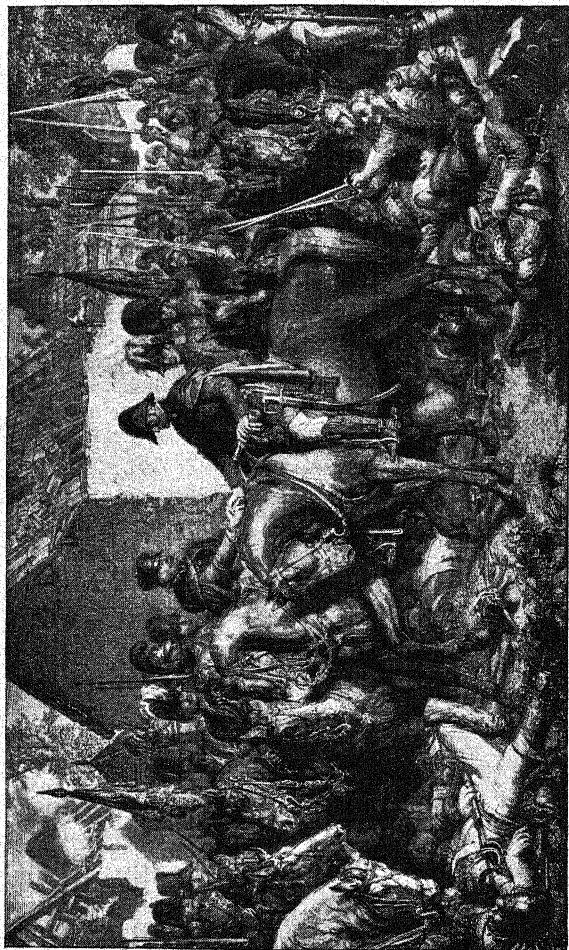
His first feeling was one of irritation. He was then filled with surprise at the determination of the Russians. His conquest, for which he had sacrificed everything, was vanishing in smoke and flames. He was seized with extreme agitation, and seemed consumed by the fires that surrounded him. He rose every moment, paced to and fro, and sat down abruptly. He traversed the apartment with quick steps; his sudden and vehement gestures betrayed his painful uneasiness; he quitted, resumed, and quitted again an urgent occupation, that he might hasten to the windows to watch the progress of the conflagration. Short and unconnected exclamations burst from him—"What a tremendous spectacle!" "It is their own work!" "So many palaces!" "What extraordinary resolution!" "What men!" "These are heroes!"

Between the fire and him was an extensive vacant space—the Moskwa and its two quays—and yet the panes of the window against which he leaned already were burning to the touch, and the constant exertions of sweepers placed on the iron roofs of the palace were not sufficient to keep it clear of the innumerable flakes of fire which fell on it. Napoleon still walked about convulsively; he stopped at every window, and beheld the terrible and victorious element furiously consuming his brilliant conquest, seizing all the

bridges and advances to the fortress, and enclosing him in it as if by a siege.

Already they breathed nothing but smoke and ashes; night approached, and was about to add to our dangers. The equinoctial gales were in alliance with the Russians, and increased in violence. The King of Naples and Prince Eugene urged Buonaparte on their knees to quit the scene of desolation; but Napoleon, now in possession of the palace of the czars, was bent upon not yielding that trophy even to the conflagration, when all at once a shout passed from mouth to mouth and roused us from our stupor, "The Kremlin is on fire!"

From the Fourth Book of the Christian Knowledge Society.



THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON AND BLÜCHER.
(From an engraving after D. Macise, R.A.)

18. HUMANITY IN WAR.

Humanity in war? Can such a thing be? Do not the two terms contradict each other? For what is war? It has been well described as "the combination of all the horrors, atrocities, crimes, and sufferings of which human nature is capable." And what is humanity? It is the sum of all the noblest qualities of the human heart—pity, tenderness, mercy, brotherly love. What room can there be in war for the exercise of these virtues?

Yet it is a fact that some of the greatest conquerors have been the most humane of men. In the moment of his victory over Pompey, when Romans were driving Romans from the field, Julius Cæsar rode hither and thither exclaiming, "Spare, spare the citizens!" And who has not been touched by the picture of Wellington moved to tears as he rode amid the dead and the dying over the field of Waterloo?

War does not always harden the soldier's heart, or crush within it feelings of humanity, even toward his enemies. Nothing in history is more curious, or more creditable to human nature, than the readiness with which enemies become friendly during a truce, or even in an accidental lull in the fighting.

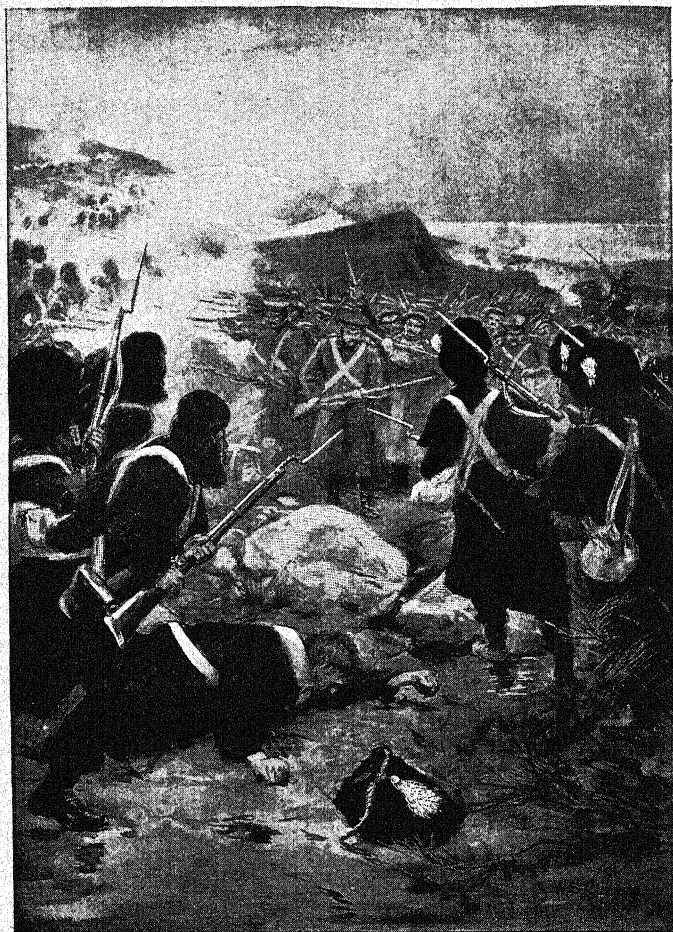
In the American Civil War, a party of Northern soldiers came face to face with a troop of Southerners in front of a farmhouse. When the order to attack was about to be given, a little girl, seeing her pet kitten in danger, rushed from the farmhouse to a tree

in the line of fire, and called out, "Kitty, kitty, come down!" The soldiers paused; then they laughed, and then they cheered; and from both sides several men ran forward to help the girl, and to warn her of the danger she was in. After that, fighting was out of the question. Northerners and Southerners were soon exchanging tobacco and sharing their rations in the most friendly way.

After the battle of Inkerman, a Russian and a Frenchman, both severely wounded, found themselves lying side by side. As the cold increased with the advance of night, they drew nearer to each other. Soon the Russian, in spite of his shivering, fell asleep from sheer weakness. When he awoke towards morning, he found himself comfortably wrapped in a second overcoat—in addition to his own—while his French friend lay beside him, dead: needless to ask whose was the second overcoat. The Russian carried a button of that coat in his pocket till his dying day.

At Waterloo, a Highland soldier, seeing the colour-sergeant of his regiment fall with the flag, rushed forward in the face of a cavalry charge to save his colours. The flag was so fast in the grip of the dead sergeant that it could not at once be disengaged. The Highlander therefore lifted both man and flag on his back, and carried them off. The leader of the French cavalry was so struck with the bravery of the deed that he halted his troop and shouted, "Bravo, Highlander!"

The great Napoleon was a man who never hesi-



THE BATTLE OF INKERMEN.

tated to sacrifice life for the advancement of his own ambition. Yet even Napoleon had his humane moments. During the battle of Austerlitz, when a body of Russians and Austrians were fleeing across a frozen lake, Napoleon ordered his cannon to be fired on the ice so as to break it up. The result was that hundreds were drowned. Next morning, he observed a wounded Russian lying on a floe of ice near the shore of the lake, and calling piteously for help. Though the soldier's plight was the result of Napoleon's order, the emperor's heart was touched, and he asked his officers to do what they could for the unfortunate man.

Several Frenchmen at once plunged into the icy water in order to effect a rescue; but their wet clothes froze, so that they could not swim, and they were themselves rescued with difficulty. Thereupon, two brave young officers, having stripped themselves to the skin, boldly swam out to the ice-floe, and succeeded in pushing it to the shore. The Russian was rescued, and soon revived, and he showed his gratitude by taking service under the emperor's flag. His rescuers showed courage surpassing that of the battlefield in saving the life of an enemy, and one of them contracted an illness by it from which he never completely recovered.

The rude game of war is being tempered more and more by the spirit of humanity. Civilized nations have agreed to prohibit the use of explosive bullets, which, like the poisoned arrows of the savage, prolong and aggravate the agonies of the wounded. Humanity

has also led to the improvement of appliances for the relief of the sick and the wounded. The field-hospital with its staff of nurses, and the ambulance-wagon with its attendant surgeons, are now as important in the equipment of an army as the ammunition-wagon and the field-battery.

The most cheering proof, however, of the advance of civilization is the growing desire of the Great Powers to settle their disputes, not by war, but by arbitration and mutual agreement; and when one thinks of it calmly, the decision of international differences by war—that is to say, by the slaughter of hundreds or of thousands of men who have little knowledge of, or interest in, the quarrel—seems to be a savage mode of proceeding, and altogether unworthy of the civilized nations of the world.

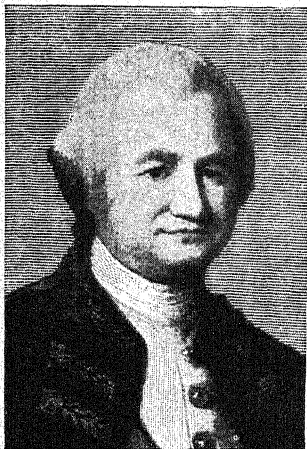
19. THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY.

Surajah Dowlah instantly assembled his whole force, and marched to encounter the English. It had been agreed that Meer Jaffier should separate himself from the Nabob, and carry over his division to Clive. But as the decisive moment approached, the fears of the conspirator overpowered his ambition. Clive had advanced to Cossimbazar; the Nabob lay with a mighty power a few miles off at Plassey; and still Meer Jaffier delayed to fulfil his engagements.

Clive was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate; and whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valour and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times as numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting, and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that, if he had taken the advice of that council, the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of

some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put everything to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed, and at the close of a toilsome day's march the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in a grove of mango trees near



CLIVE.

(From a picture in the National Portrait Gallery.)

Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep; he heard, through the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize, he was in a few hours to contend.

Nor was the rest of Surajah Dowlah more peaceful. His mind, at once weak and stormy, was distracted by wild and horrible apprehensions. Appalled by the greatness and nearness of the crisis, distrusting his captains, dreading every one who approached him, dreading to be left alone, he sat gloomily in his tent.

The day broke—the day which was to decide the fate of India. At sunrise the army of the Nabob,

pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn from the bold race which inhabits the northern provinces; and the practised eye of Clive could perceive that both the men and the horses were more powerful than those of the Carnatic. The force which he had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English; and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline.

The battle commenced with a cannonade, in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited



PLASSEY—FLIGHT OF THE NABOB.

multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable wagons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of nearly sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But as soon as he saw the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and, when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next morning he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. But his apprehensions were speedily removed. Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet camel could carry him, and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his coun-



ESCAPE OF SURAJAH DOWLAH.

cillors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Meer Jaffier had arrived, and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and, accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

From "Essays" (Lord Clive), by MACAULAY.

20. THE KRAKATOA ERUPTION.

About eleven o'clock on Sunday morning, the thirteenth of May 1883, the trouble began. Java, Sumatra, and Borneo were convulsed by earthquakes. The surface of the earth rocked, houses tumbled down, and big trees were shaken out of the ground. Earthquakes are no rarity in these islands, but this earthquake showed no signs of ceasing. The earth quivered constantly, and from its depths there seemed to rise strange sounds and hollow explosions.

On Thursday there came a telegram from Anjer, ninety miles away, on the north-west coast of Java, intimating that a volcano had broken out on Krakatoa island, about thirty miles west of Anjer, in Sunda Strait. I was requested by the Dutch Government to go to the scene of action and take scientific observations, and by four o'clock that afternoon I started with a party on board a special steamer from Batavia.

As we rounded the northern extremity of Java, we saw ascending from Krakatoa, still fifty miles away, an immense column of smoke. Its appearance changed as we approached: first it looked like flame, then it would appear to be steam, and again it would take the appearance of a pillar of fire inside one of white fleecy wool. The diameter of this pillar of fire and smoke I should put down at one and a half miles. All the while we heard that sullen, thunderous roar which had been a feature of this disturbance ever since Sunday, and was now becoming louder.

We remained on deck all night and watched. The

din increased till we could with difficulty hear one another's voices. Dawn approached, and when the rays of the sun fell on the shores of Krakatoa, we saw them reflected from what we thought was a river, and we resolved to steam into its mouth and disembark. When we came to within three-quarters of a mile of the shore, we discovered that what we supposed to be a river was a torrent of molten sulphur. The smell almost overpowered us. We steamed away to windward, and made for the other side of the island.

This island, though volcanic, had up till now been quiet for at least a century. It was eight or ten miles long and four wide, and was covered with forests of fine mahogany and rosewood trees. It was inhabited by a few fishermen, but we found no signs of these inhabitants. The land, down to the water's edge, was covered with powdered pumice stone, which rained down from the clouds around the great column of fire. Everything with life had already disappeared from the landscape, which was covered with a steaming mass of stones and ashes.

Several of us landed, and began walking inland. We sank deep in the soft pumice, which blistered our feet with its heat. I climbed painfully upwards towards the crater, in order to measure it by my sextant; but in a short time the heat melted the mercury off the mirror of the instrument. I was then half a mile from the crater. As I retraced my steps towards the shore, I saw the bottom of each footprint I had made on my way up glowing red

with the heat from beneath. We photographed the scene from the deck of the steamer, where the fire-hose was kept playing constantly, wetting the rigging and everything about the ship to prevent her taking fire.

The steamer then returned to Batavia, and I went to reside at Anjer, where, from my villa on the hillside a mile inland, I could see Krakatoa, thirty miles away, belching out its never-ending eruption. We supposed that it would go on till it burned itself out, and then become quiet again.

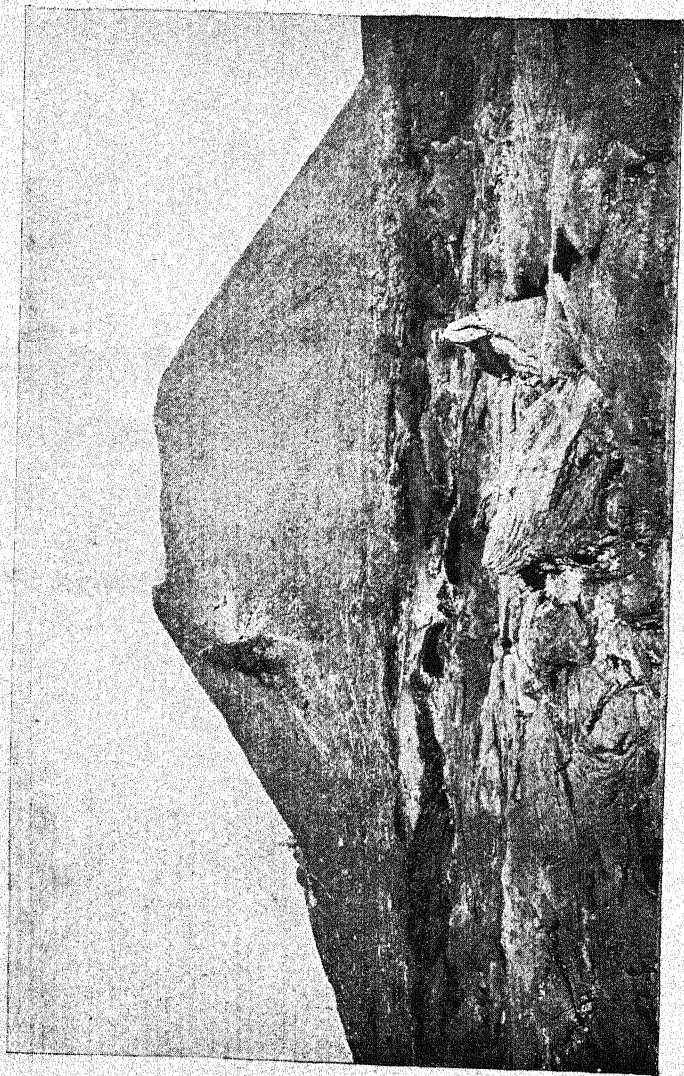
On Sunday morning, the twelfth day of August, nearly three months after, I was sitting on the veranda of my house taking my morning cup of tea. I saw the fishing-boats lying at anchor in the bay, the fishermen themselves being on shore at rest. As my gaze rested on the boats, I suddenly became aware that they were all beginning to move rapidly in one direction. Then in an instant, to my intense surprise, they all disappeared.

I ran further up the hillside to get a better view, and looked far out to sea. Instantly a great glare of fire right in the midst of the sea caught my eye. All the way across the bay and the strait, in a line of flame reaching to Krakatoa itself, the bottom of the sea seemed to have cracked open so that the subterranean fires were belching forth. On either side the waters were pouring into this gulf with a tremendous noise, but the fire was not extinguished. The hissing roar brought out the people of Anjer in excited crowds.

My eyes were turned away for a moment as I beckoned to some one, and during that moment came a terrible, deafening explosion. It stunned me; and when I was able again to turn my eyes to the bay, I could see nothing. The whole scene was shrouded in darkness, from amid which came cries and groans, the creaking of breaking beams in the houses, and above all the roar of the breakers on the shore. The city of Anjer, with its sixty thousand people, had been engulfed!

I afterwards found that the water was one hundred feet deep where the city of Anjer had been, and that the coast-line had moved one and a half miles inland, where the city of New Anjer is now built. A big island in the strait had been split in two, with a wide passage between its two parts. An island to the north-west of Krakatoa had disappeared. Along the coast of Java for fifteen or twenty miles many new islands were formed which afterwards disappeared. The air was filled with minute particles of dust, which after some weeks spread even to Europe and America. What the causes of such a tremendous convulsion may have been it is quite impossible accurately to say.

From the Narrative of J. T. VAN GESTEL.



THE SUMMIT OF VESUVIUS.

21. DEATH OF PLINY THE ELDER.

(A.D. 79.)

Your request that I would send you an account of my uncle's death, in order to transmit a more exact relation of it to posterity, deserves my acknowledgments; for if this accident is celebrated by your pen, the glory of it, I am well assured, will be rendered for ever illustrious. It is with extreme willingness, therefore, that I execute your commands.

He was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 23rd of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just returned from taking the benefit of the sun, and after bathing himself in cold water and taking a slight repast, was retired to his study. He immediately rose, and went out upon an eminence from which he might more distinctly view this very uncommon appearance.

It was not at that distance discernible from what mountain this cloud issued, but it was found afterwards to ascend from Mount Vesuvius. I cannot give a more exact description of its figure than by comparing it to a pine tree, for it shot up to a great height in the form of a trunk, which extended itself at the top into a sort of branches. It appeared sometimes bright and sometimes dark and spotted, as it was either more or less impregnated with earth and cinders.

This extraordinary phenomenon excited my uncle to take a nearer view of it. He ordered a light

vessel to be got ready, and gave me liberty, if I thought proper, to attend him. I chose rather to continue my studies, for, as it happened, he had given me some employment of that kind.

As he was coming out of the house he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened her; for her villa being situated at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, there was no way to escape but by sea. She earnestly entreated him, therefore, to come to her assistance.

He accordingly changed his first design. He ordered the galleys to put to sea, and went himself on board with an intention of assisting not only Rectina, but several others; for the villas stand extremely thick upon that beautiful coast. When hastening to the place whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his direct course to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the dreadful scene.

He was now so nigh the mountain that the cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, together with pumicestones and pieces of burning rock. His ships were likewise in danger, not only of being aground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountain and obstructed all the shore.

Here he stopped to consider whether he should turn back again. Upon the pilot advising him to do

so, "Fortune," said he, "befriends the brave; carry me to Pomponianus." Pomponianus was then at Stabiae. He had already sent his baggage on board a ship; for though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet being within the view of it, and indeed extremely near, he was determined, if it should in the least increase, to put to sea as soon as the wind should change.

The wind was favourable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation. He embraced him with tenderness, encouraging and exhorting him to keep up his spirits, and, the more to dissipate his fears, he ordered, with an air of unconcern, the baths to be got ready; when, after having bathed, he sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is equally heroic) with all the appearance of it.

In the meanwhile the eruption from Mount Vesuvius flamed out in several places with much violence, which the darkness of the night contributed to render still more visible and dreadful. But my uncle, in order to soothe the apprehensions of his friend, assured him it was only the burning of the villages, which the country people had abandoned to the flames; after this he retired to rest, and it is most certain he was so little discomposed as to fall into a deep sleep. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, if he had continued there any time longer it would have been impossible for him to have made his way out; it was thought proper, therefore, to awaken him.

He got up and went to Pomponianus and the rest of his company, who were not unconcerned enough to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be more prudent to trust to the houses, which now shook from side to side with frequent and violent concussions, or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though light indeed, yet fell in large showers. In this distress they resolved for the fields as the less dangerous situation of the two.

They went out then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins, and this was their whole defence against the storm of stones that fell around them. Though it was now day everywhere else, with them it was darker than the most obscure night, excepting only what light proceeded from the fire and flames. They thought proper to go down farther upon the shore, to observe if they might safely put out to sea; but they found the waves still run extremely high and boisterous.

There my uncle, having drunk a draught or two of cold water, threw himself down upon a cloth which was spread for him, when immediately the flames, and a strong smell of sulphur which was the forerunner of them, dispersed the rest of the company, and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead, suffocated, as I conjecture, by some vapour, having always had weak lungs, and frequently being subjected to a difficulty of breathing.

From the Latin of PLINY THE YOUNGER.

22. ESCAPE FROM THE BASTILLE.

To any man who had the least notion of the situation of the Bastille, its extent, its towers, its discipline, and the incredible precautions to chain its victims, the mere idea of escaping from it would appear the effect of insanity, and would inspire nothing but pity for a wretch so devoid of sense as to dare to conceive it.

A moment's reflection would show that it was hopeless to attempt an escape by the gates. We had no resource but by the outside. There was in our chamber a fireplace, the chimney of which came out in the extreme height of the tower; it was full of gratings and bars of iron, which in several parts of it scarcely left a free passage for the smoke. Should we be able to get to the top of the tower, we should have below us a precipice of great height, at the bottom of which was a broad ditch, surrounded by a very lofty wall.

We were without assistance, without tools, without materials, constantly watched night and day, and guarded, besides, by a great number of sentinels. So many obstacles, so many dangers, did not deter me. I hinted my scheme to my comrade; he thought me a madman, and relapsed into despair. I was obliged alone to digest my plan, to anticipate the frightful host of difficulties, and find the means of remedying them all.

To accomplish our object, we had to climb to

the top of the chimney, notwithstanding the many iron gratings which were opposed to our ascent; and then, in order to descend from the top of the tower into the ditch, we required a ladder of eighty feet at least, and another ladder, necessarily of wood, to get out of the ditch. If I could get these materials, I must hide them from every eye, must work without noise, deceive all our spies, and this for months together.

Now for the details of my operations. Our first object was to find a place of concealment for our tools and materials, in case we should be so fortunate as to procure any. By dint of reflecting on the subject, a thought struck me which appeared to me a very happy one. I had occupied several different chambers in the Bastille, and had always observed, whenever the chambers either above or below me were inhabited, that I had heard very distinctly any noise made in either. On the present occasion I heard all the movements of the prisoner above, but not of him below; nevertheless I felt confident there was a prisoner there. I conjectured at last that there might be a double floor with a space between.

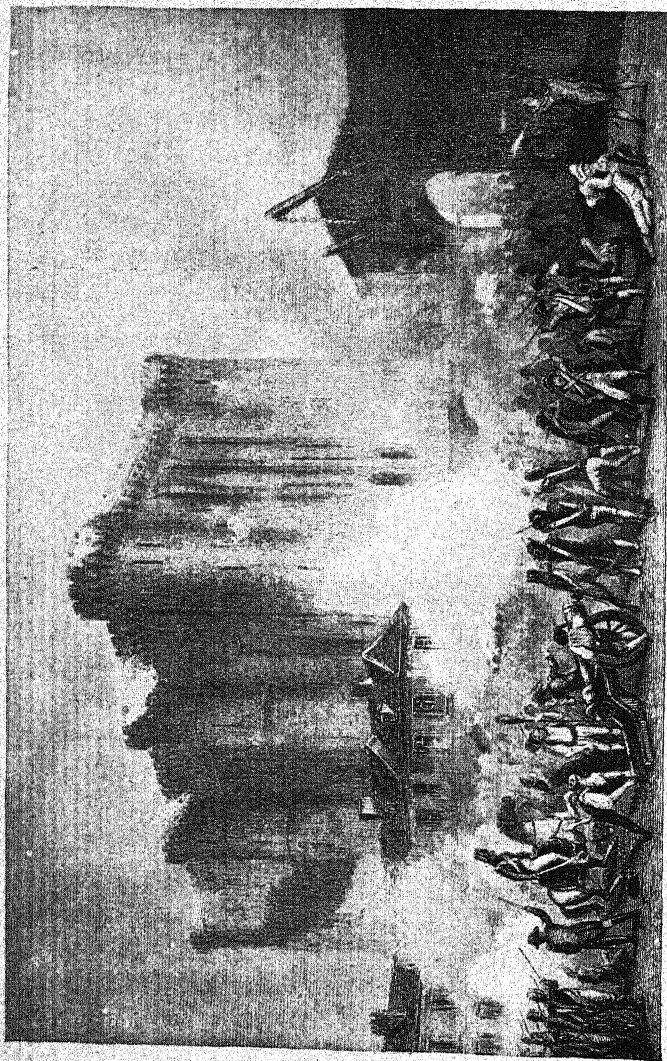
By making a calculation, I came to the conclusion that there must be, between the floor of our chamber and the ceiling of that below, a space of five feet six inches, which could not be filled up either by stones or wood on account of their weight. As soon as we were shut up and bolted in, I embraced D'Alegre with delight. "My friend," said I, "patience and courage; we are saved! We can hide our ropes

and materials; that is all that is wanted! We are saved!"

"What!" said he, "have you not given up your dreams? Ropes and materials! where are they, and where shall we get them?" "Ropes!" said I; "why, we have more than we want: that trunk" (showing him mine) "contains a thousand feet of them." Looking at me steadfastly, he replied, "My good friend, try to regain your senses and to calm your frenzy. I know the contents of your trunk: there is not a single inch of rope in it." "Ay," said I; "but have I not a large stock of linen—twelve dozen of shirts, a great number of napkins, stockings, nightcaps, and other things;—will not they supply us? We will unravel them, and we shall have ropes enough."

"But how are we to extract the iron gratings of our chimney?" said D'Alegre. "Where are we to get the materials for the wooden ladder which we shall want? where obtain tools for all these works? We cannot create things." "My friend," I replied, "it is genius which creates; and we have that which despair gives, that will guide our hands. Once more, we are saved!" We had a flat table supported by iron legs; we gave them an edge by rubbing them on the tiled floor. Of the steel of our tinder-box we made, in less than two hours, a good knife, with which we formed two handles to these iron legs. The principal use of these was to force out the gratings of our chimney.

In the evenings, after the daily inspection, with these iron legs we raised some tiles of our floor; and



ATTACK ON THE BASTILLE DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.
(From an old French engraving.)

by digging for about six hours, we discovered that there was a vacant space of about four feet between the floor and the ceiling. We replaced the tiles, so that they scarcely appeared to have been raised.

This done, we ripped the seams and hems of two shirts, and drew out the threads of them one by one. We twisted these and formed a cord about fifty-five feet long, and with it constructed a rope ladder, which was intended to support us aloft while we drew the bars and spikes of iron out of the chimney.

This was the most painful and troublesome of our labours, and cost us six months' toil, the recollection of which makes one shudder. We could only work by bending our bodies in the most painful positions; an hour at a time was all we could well bear, and we never came down without hands covered with blood. The iron bars were fastened with an extremely hard mortar, which we had no means of softening but by blowing water with our mouths into the holes as we worked them.

Judge what this work must have been when we were well pleased if, in a whole night, we had worked away the eighth of an inch of this mortar. When we got a bar out, we replaced it in its holes, that when we were inspected the deficiency might not appear, and so as to enable us to take all of them out at once should we be in a situation to escape. After six months of this obstinate and cruel work, we applied ourselves to the wooden ladder which was necessary to mount from the ditch upon the parapet,

and from thence into the governor's garden. This ladder required to be twenty feet long.

We devoted to this part of our work nearly all our fuel: it consisted of round logs about eighteen or twenty inches long. We found we should want blocks or pulleys, and several other things, for which a saw was indispensable. I made one from an iron candlestick, by means of my knife; with this knife, the saw, and the iron legs of our table we reduced the size of our logs, and made mortises to join them one into the other.

We made the ladder with only one upright, through which we put twenty rounds, each round being fifteen inches long. The upright was three inches diameter, so that each round projected clear six inches on each side. To every piece of which the ladder was composed the proper round of each joint was tied with a string, to enable us to put it together readily in the dark. As we completed each piece we concealed it between the two floors. With our tools we made others—a pair of compasses, a square, a carpenter's rule, etc., etc.—and hid them in our magazine.

These things being complete, we set about our principal ladder, which was to be at least eighty feet long. We began by unravelling our linen; shirts, napkins, nightcaps, stockings, drawers, pocket handkerchiefs—everything which could supply thread or silk. As we made a ball we concealed it in the hiding-place, and when we had a sufficient quantity we employed a whole night in twisting it into a rope; and I defy a ropemaker to have done it better.

The upper part of the building of the Bastille overhangs three or four feet. This would necessarily cause our ladder to swing about, enough to turn the strongest head. To obviate this, and to prevent our falling, we made a second rope, one hundred and sixty feet long. This rope was to be passed through a kind of double block in case the person descending should be suspended in the air without being able to get down lower. Besides these, we made several other ropes of shorter lengths, to fasten our ladder to a cannon, and for other unforeseen occasions.

When all these ropes were finished we measured them: they amounted to fourteen hundred feet. We then made two hundred and eight rounds for the rope and wooden ladders. To prevent the noise which the rounds would make against the wall during our descent, we gave them coverings formed of the linings of our morning gowns, of our waistcoats, and our under-waistcoats. In all these preparations we employed eighteen months, but still they were incomplete.

We had provided means to get to the top of the tower, to get into and out of the ditch; two more were wanting—one to climb upon the parapet, from the parapet into the governor's garden, and thence to get down into the ditch of the Port St. Antoine; the other to avoid the sentinels with which the parapet was always well furnished.

We might fix on a dark and rainy night, when the sentinels did not go their rounds, and escape in that way; but it might rain when we climbed our chimney, and might clear up at the very moment

when we arrived at the parapet. We should then meet with the chief of the watch, who constantly inspected the parapet; and he being always provided with lights, it would be impossible to conceal ourselves, and we should be inevitably ruined.

The other plan increased our labours, but was the less dangerous of the two. It consisted in making a way through the wall which separates the ditch of the Bastille from that of the Port St. Antoine. I considered that in the numerous floods during which the Seine had filled this ditch the water must have injured the mortar, and rendered it less difficult, and so we should be enabled to break a passage through the wall. For this purpose we should require an auger to make holes in the mortar, so as to insert the points of iron bars to be taken out of our chimney, and with them force out the stones, and so make our way through. Accordingly, we made an auger with one of the feet of a bedstead, and fastened a handle to it in the form of a cross.

We fixed on Wednesday, the 25th February 1756, for our flight. The river had overflowed its banks; there were four feet of water in the ditch of the Bastille, as well as in that of the Port St. Antoine, by which we hoped to effect our deliverance. I filled a leathern portmanteau with a change of clothes for both of us, in case we were so fortunate as to escape.

Dinner was scarcely over when we set up our great ladder of ropes—that is, we put the rounds to it, and hid it under our beds; then we arranged our

wooden ladder in three pieces. We put our iron bars in their cases, to prevent their making a noise; and we packed up our bottle of spirits to warm us, and restore our strength during our work in the water, up to the neck, for many hours. These precautions taken, we waited till our supper was brought up.

I first got up the chimney. I had rheumatism in my left arm, but I thought little of the pain: I soon experienced one much more severe. I had taken none of the precautions used by chimney-sweepers. I was nearly choked by the soot; and having no guards on my knees and elbows, they were so scratched that the blood ran down my legs and hands. As soon as I got to the top of the chimney I let down a piece of twine to D'Alegre; to this he attached the end of the rope to which our port-manteau was fastened. I drew it up, unfastened it, and threw it on the platform of the Bastille.

In the same way we hoisted up the wooden ladder, the two iron bars, and all our other articles: we finished by the ladder of ropes, the end of which I allowed to hang down to aid D'Alegre in getting up, while I held the upper part by means of a large wooden peg which we had prepared on purpose. I passed it through the cord and placed it across the funnel of the chimney. By these means my companion avoided suffering what I did. This done, I came down from the top of the chimney, where I had been in a very painful position, and both of us were on the platform of the Bastille.

We now arranged our different articles. We

began by making a roll of our ladder of ropes of about four feet diameter and one foot thick. We rolled it to the tower called the Tower of Treason, which appeared to us the most favourable for our descent. We fastened one end of the ladder of ropes to a piece of cannon, and then lowered it down the wall; then we fastened the block, and passed the long rope through it. This I tied round my body, and D'Alegre slackened it as I went down the ladder. Notwithstanding this precaution, I swung about in the air at every step I made. At length I landed without accident in the ditch.

Immediately D'Alegre lowered my portmanteau and other things. I found a little spot uncovered by water, on which I put them. Then my companion followed my example. It did not rain; and we heard the sentinel marching at a distance of twenty or thirty feet. We were, therefore, forced to give up our plan of escaping by the parapet and the governor's garden. We resolved to use our iron bars. We crossed the ditch straight over to the wall which divides it from the Port St. Antoine, and went to work sturdily.

Just at this point the water was deep. Elsewhere it was about up to our middles; here, to our armpits. It had thawed only a few days, so that the water had still floating ice in it; we were nine hours in it, exhausted by fatigue and benumbed by the cold. We had hardly begun our work before the chief of the watch came round with his lantern, which cast a light on the place where we were working. We had

no alternative but to put our heads under water as he passed, which was every half-hour.

At length, after nine hours of incessant alarm and exertion, after having worked out the stones one by one, we succeeded in making, in a wall four feet six inches thick, a hole sufficiently wide, and we both crept through. We were giving way to our transports, when we fell into a danger which we had not foreseen, and which nearly proved fatal to us. In crossing the ditch St. Antoine to get into the road to Bercy, we fell into the aqueduct which was in the middle. This aqueduct had ten feet water over our heads, and two feet of mud on the side.

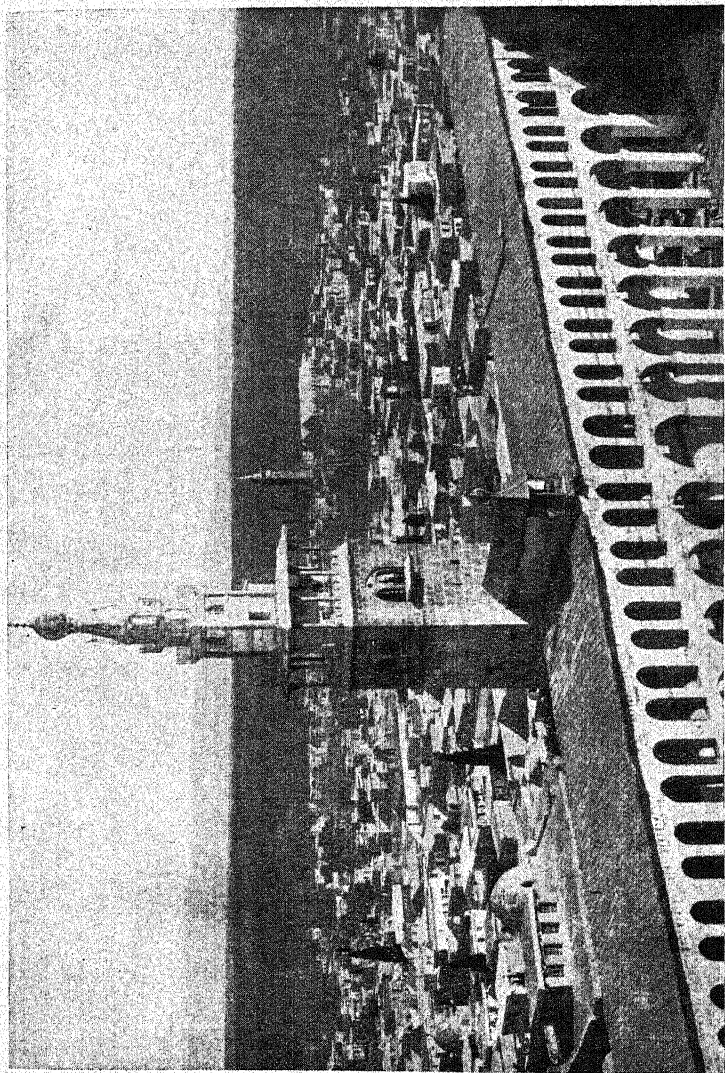
D'Alegre fell on me, and nearly carried me down. Had that misfortune happened we were lost, for we had not strength enough left to get up again, and we must have been drowned. Finding myself laid hold of by D'Alegre, I gave him a blow with my fist, which made him let go; and at the same instant throwing myself forward, I got out of the aqueduct. I then felt for D'Alegre, and getting hold of his hair, drew him to me. We were soon out of the ditch, and just as the clock struck five were on the highroad. Penetrated by the same feeling, we threw ourselves into each other's arms, and after a long embrace we fell on our knees to offer our thanks to the Almighty, who had snatched us from so many dangers.

DE LATUDE

23. DAMASCUS.

Damascus should be approached only one way, and that is from the north-west. The traveller who comes from that quarter passes over the great chain of Anti-Libanus; he crosses the watershed, and he finds himself following the course of a little stream flowing through a richly cultivated valley. The stream is the Barada. It rises in the plain of Zebdani; it flows on, and the cultivation, which at its rise spreads far and wide along its banks, nourished by the rills which feed it, is gradually contracted within the limits of its single channel. The mountains rise round it absolutely bare. There are few peaks in the world more sterile than these Syrian ranges. But the river winds through them, visible everywhere by its mass of vegetation—willow, poplar, hawthorn, walnut, hanging over a rushing volume of crystal water—the more striking from the contrast with the naked desert in which it is found.

One vast accession it receives—the volume of water which bursts from the rock of Fijeh, out of the sanctuary which, as if in admiration of this most copious of all the springs of Syria, was built over its source. Perhaps in no part of the East is there so wonderful a witness to the peculiarly Oriental connection between verdure and running water as the view on which we are now entering. The further we advance, the contrast becomes more and more forcible—the mountains more bare, the green of the river-bed more deep and rich. At last a cleft opens in the rocky



DAMASCUS.

hills between two precipitous cliffs: up the side of one of these cliffs the road winds; on the summit of the cliff there stands a ruined chapel. Through the arches of that chapel, from the very edge of the mountain range, the traveller looks down on the plain of Damascus. It is here seen in its widest and fullest perfection, with the visible explanation of the whole secret of its great and enduring charm, that which it must have had when it was the solitary seat of civilization in Syria, and which it will have as long as the world lasts. The river with its green banks is seen at the bottom, rushing through the cleft; it bursts forth, and, as if in a moment, scatters over the plain, through a circle of thirty miles, the same verdure which had hitherto been confined to its single channel. It is like the bursting of a shell—the eruption of a volcano; but an eruption not of death, but of life.

Far and wide in front extends the level plain, its horizon bare, its lines of surrounding hills bare, all bare far away on the road to Palmyra and Bagdad. In the midst of this plain lies at our feet the vast lake or island of deep verdure, walnuts and apricots waving above, corn and grass below; and in the midst of this mass of foliage rises—striking out its white arms of streets hither and thither, and its white minarets above the trees which embosom them—the city of Damascus. On the right towers the snowy height of Hermon, overlooking the whole scene; close behind are the sterile limestone mountains: so that one stands literally between the living and the dead;

and the ruined arches of the ancient chapel, which serve as a centre and framework to the prospect and retrospect, still preserve the magnificent story which, whether fact or fiction, is well worthy of this sublime view.

Here, hard by the sacred heights of Salhiyeh, consecrated by the caverns and tombs of a thousand Mussulman saints, the Prophet is said to have stood, whilst yet a camel-driver from Mecca, and, after gazing on the scene below, to have turned away without entering the city. "Man," he said, "can have but one paradise, and my paradise is fixed above!" It is this grand aspect of Damascus which at once reveals the long-sustained antiquity of the city. Its situation secured its perpetuity: the first seat of man in leaving, the last on entering, the wide desert of the East. There may be other views in the world more beautiful; there can hardly be another at once so beautiful and so instructive. "This is indeed worth all the toil and danger it has cost me to come here," was the speech of the distinguished historian [Henry Thomas Buckle] whose premature death at Damascus almost immediately afterwards gave a mournful significance to his words.

From STANLEY'S "Sinai and Palestine."

24. DEATH OF SOCRATES.

Thus saying, he got up and went into another room to bathe, and Crito followed him; but us he requested to stay behind. We remained, therefore, talking over with one another and inquiring into what had been said, ever and again coming back to the misfortune which had befallen us; for we looked upon ourselves as doomed to go through the rest of life like orphans, bereft of a father.

After he had bathed, his children were brought to him—for he had three sons, two very young, and one who was older—and the women of his household also arrived. And having talked with them in the presence of Crito, and given them all his directions, he bade them depart, and himself returned to us. It was now near sunset, for he had spent a long time in the inner room. He came then and sat down with us, but he did not speak much after this.

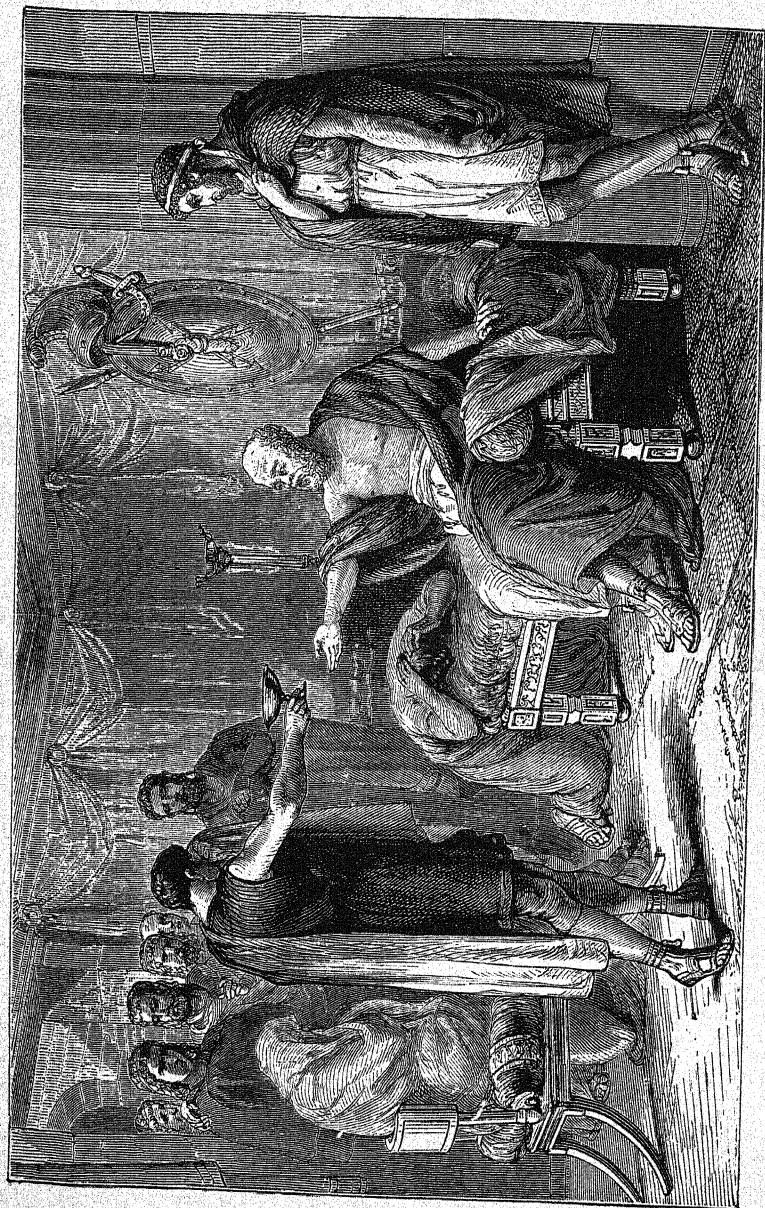
The servant of the magistrates came, and standing by him said: "I shall not have to reproach you, O Socrates, as I have others, with being enraged and cursing me when I announce to them, by order of the magistrates, that they must drink the poison; but during this time of your imprisonment I have learned to know you as the noblest and gentlest and best man of all that have ever come here, and so I am sure now that you will not be angry with me; for you know the real authors of this, and will blame them alone. And now—for you know what it is I have come to announce—farewell, and try to bear as best you may the inevitable."

And upon this, bursting into tears, he turned and went away; and Socrates, looking after him, said: "May it fare well with you also! We will do what you have bidden." And to us he added: "How courteous the man is! The whole time I have been here he has been constantly coming to see me, and has frequently talked to me, and shown himself to be the kindest of men; and see how feelingly he weeps for me now! But come, Crito, we must obey him. So let the poison be brought, if it is already mixed; if not, let the man mix it."

And Crito said: "But, Socrates, the sun, I think, is still upon the mountains, and has not yet gone down. Others, I know, have not taken the poison till very late, and have feasted and drunk right heartily, some even enjoying the company of their intimates long after receiving the order. So do not hasten, for there is yet time."

But Socrates said: "It is very natural, Crito, that those of whom you speak should do this, for they think to gain thereby; but it is just as natural that I should not do so, for I do not think that, by drinking the poison a little later, I should gain anything more than a laugh at my own expense for being greedy of life when nothing is left. So go and do as I desire."

At these words Crito motioned to the servant standing by, who then went out, and after some time came back with the man who was to give the poison which he brought mixed in a cup. And Socrates seeing the man, said: "Well, my friend, I must ask



DEATH OF SOCRATES.

you, since you have had experience in these matters, what I ought to do."

"Nothing," said he, "but walk about after drinking until you feel a heaviness in your legs, and then, if you lie down, the poison will take effect of itself."

With this he handed the cup to Socrates, who took it right cheerfully without tremor or change of colour or countenance, and, looking at the man from under his brows with that intent gaze peculiar to himself, said: "What say you to pouring an offering from this cup to one of the gods? Is it allowed, or not?"

"We prepare, Socrates," answered he, "only just so much as we think is the right quantity to drink."

"I understand," said he; "but prayer to the gods is surely allowed, and must be made, that it may fare well with me on my journey yonder. For this, then, I pray, and so be it!"

Thus speaking, he put the cup to his lips, and right easily and blithely drank it off. Now most of us had until then been able to keep back our tears; but when we saw him drinking, and then that he had finished the draught, we could do so no longer. In spite of myself, my tears burst forth in floods, so that I covered my face and wept aloud, not for him assuredly, but for my own fate in being deprived of such a friend. Now Crito, even before I gave way, had not been able to restrain his tears, and so had moved away. But Apollodorus all along had not ceased to weep; and now, when he burst into loud sobs, there was not one of those present who was not overcome by his tears and distress, except Socrates

himself. But he asked: "What are you doing, you strange people? My chief reason for sending away the women was that we might be spared such discordance as this; for I have heard that a man ought to die in solemn stillness. So pray be composed, and restrain yourselves!"

On hearing this we were ashamed, and forced back our tears. And he walked about until he said that he began to feel a heaviness in his legs, and then he lay down on his back, as he had been told to do. Thereupon the man who had given the poison, taking hold of him, examined from time to time his feet and legs, and then, pressing one foot hard, asked if he felt it, to which he answered, No; and after that again his legs, and then still higher, showing us the while that he was getting cold and stiff. Then Socrates himself did the same, and said that by the time the poison had reached his heart he should be gone. And now he was cold nearly up to his middle, when Crito said, "Think, Socrates, if you have nothing else to say."

There was no answer to this question; but after a moment Socrates stirred, and when the man uncovered him, we saw that his face was set. Such was the end of our friend—a man whom we may well call, of all men known to us of our day, the best, and besides the wisest and the most just.

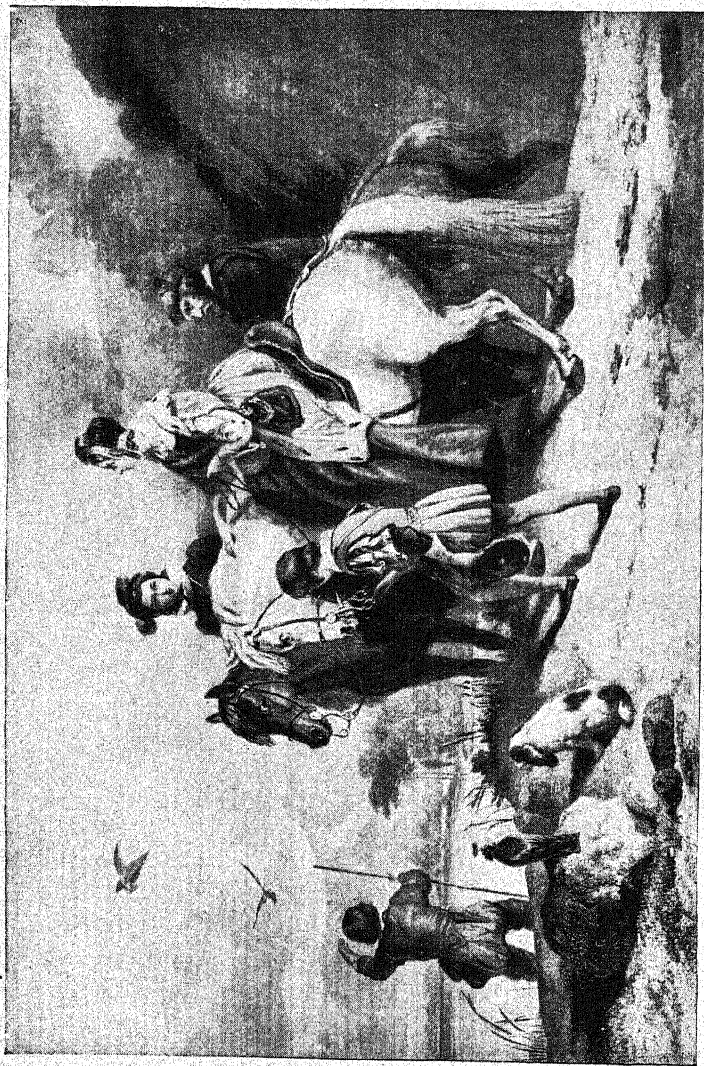
From PROFESSOR GOODWIN'S edition of Plato's "Socrates."

25. SPORTS, AGRICULTURE, AND TRADE OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

The favourite diversions of the Middle Ages in the intervals of war were those of hunting and hawking. The former must in all countries be a source of pleasure, but it seems to have been enjoyed in moderation by the Greeks and Romans. With the northern invaders, however, it was rather a predominant appetite than an amusement; it was their pride and their ornament, the theme of their songs, the object of their laws, and the business of their lives. Falconry, unknown as a diversion to the ancients, became from the fourth century an equally delightful occupation.

A knight seldom stirred from his house without a falcon on his wrist or a greyhound that followed him. Thus are Harold and his attendants represented in the famous tapestry of Bayeux. And in the monuments of those who died anywhere but on the field of battle it is usual to find the greyhound lying at their feet or the bird upon their wrist. Nor are the tombs of ladies without their falcon; for this diversion, being of less danger and fatigue than the chase, was shared by the delicate sex.

It was impossible to repress the eagerness with which the clergy, especially after the barbarians had been tempted by rich bishoprics to take upon them the sacred functions, rushed into these secular amusements. Prohibitions of councils, however frequently repeated, produced little effect. In some instances a

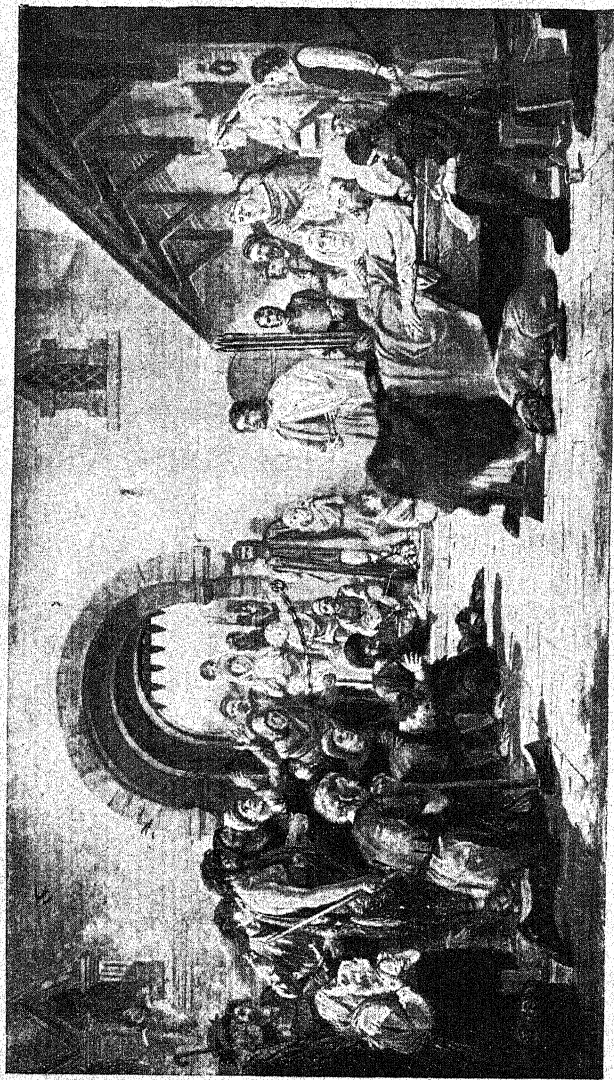


HAWKING.
(From a picture by Landseer.)

particular monastery obtained a dispensation. Thus that of Saint Denis, in 774, represented to Charlemagne that the flesh of hunted animals was salutary for sick monks, and that their skins would serve to bind the books in the library. Reasons equally cogent, we may presume, could not be wanting in every other case.

Though hunting had ceased to be a necessary means of procuring food, it was a very convenient resource, on which the wholesomeness and comfort as well as the luxury of the table depended. Before the natural pastures were improved, and new kinds of fodder for cattle discovered, it was impossible to maintain the summer stock during the cold season. Hence a portion of it was regularly slaughtered and salted for winter provision. We may suppose that, when no alternative was offered but these salted meats, even the leanest venison was devoured with relish. There was somewhat more excuse, therefore, for the severity with which the lords of forests and manors preserved the beasts of the chase, than if they had been considered as merely objects of sport.

The laws relating to preservation of game were in every country uncommonly rigorous. They formed in England that odious system of forest laws which distinguished the tyranny of our Norman kings. Capital punishment for killing a stag or wild boar was frequent, and perhaps warranted by law, until the charter of John. The French code was less severe, but even Henry the Fourth enacted the pain of death against the repeated offence of chasing deer



SERF EMANCIPATION.

(From the picture by E. Armitage, R.A., in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.)

in the royal forests. The privilege of hunting was reserved to the nobility till the reign of Louis the Ninth, who extended it in some degree to persons of lower birth.

This excessive passion for the sports of the field produced those evils which are apt to result from it—a strenuous idleness, which disdained all useful occupations, and an oppressive spirit toward the peasantry. The devastation committed under the pretence of destroying wild animals, which had been already protected in their depredations, is noticed in serious authors, and has also been the topic of popular ballads. What effect this must have had on agriculture it is easy to conjecture. The levelling of forests, the draining of morasses, and the extirpation of mischievous animals which inhabit them, are the first object of man's labour in reclaiming the earth to his use; and these were forbidden by a landed aristocracy, who had not yet learned to sacrifice their pleasures to their avarice.

These habits of the rich, and the miserable servitude of those who cultivated the land, rendered its fertility unavailing. There are but two possible modes in which the produce of the earth can be increased—one by rendering fresh land serviceable; the other by improving the fertility of that which is already cultivated. The last is only attainable by the application of capital and of skill to agriculture, neither of which could be expected in the ruder ages of society. The former is, to a certain extent, always practicable whilst waste lands remain; but

it was checked by laws hostile to improvement, and by the general tone of manners.

The condition even of internal trade was hardly preferable to that of agriculture. There is not a vestige, perhaps, to be discovered for several centuries of any considerable manufacture; I mean, of working up articles of common utility to an extent beyond what the necessities of an adjacent district required. Rich men kept domestic artisans among their servants; even kings, in the ninth century, had their clothes made by the women upon their farms; but the peasantry must have been supplied with garments and implements of labour by purchase; and every town, it cannot be doubted, had its weaver, its smith, and its currier.

But there were almost insuperable impediments to any extended traffic—the insecurity of movable wealth, and the difficulty of accumulating it; the ignorance of mutual wants; the peril of robbery in conveying merchandise, and the certainty of extortion. In the domains of every lord a toll was paid in passing his bridge, or along his highway, or at his market.

These customs, fair and necessary in their principle, became in practice oppressive, because they were arbitrary, and renewed in every petty territory which the road might intersect. One regulation rather amusingly illustrates the modesty and moderation of the landholders. It is enacted that no one shall be compelled to go out of his way in order to pay toll at a particular bridge, when he

can cross the river more conveniently at another place.

These provisions, like most others of that age, were unlikely to produce much amendment. It was only the milder species, however, of feudal lords who were content with the tribute of merchants. The more ravenous descended from their fortress to pillage the wealthy traveller, or shared in the spoil of inferior plunderers, whom they both protected and instigated.

Proofs occur, even in the latter periods of the Middle Ages, when government had regained its energy, and civilization had made considerable progress, of public robberies by men of noble rank. In the more savage times, before the twelfth century, they were probably too frequent to excite much attention. It was a custom in some places to way-lay travellers, and not only to plunder, but to sell them as slaves, or compel them to pay ransom. Harold, son of Godwin, having been wrecked on the coast of France, was imprisoned by the lord, says an historian, according to the custom of that territory.

Germany appears to have been, upon the whole, the country where downright robbery was most unscrupulously practised by the great. Their castles, erected on almost inaccessible heights among the woods, became the secure receptacle of robber bands, who spread terror over the country.

HALLAM.

26. THE KING OF THE CROCODILES.

"Now, woman, why without your veil?
And wherefore do you look so pale?
And, woman, why do you groan so sadly,
And wherefore beat your bosom madly?"

"Oh, I have lost my darling boy,
In whom my soul had all its joy;
And I for sorrow have torn my veil,
And sorrow hath made my very heart pale.

"Oh, I have lost my darling child,
And that's the loss that makes me wild;
He stooped by the river down to drink,
And there was a crocodile by the brink.

"He did not venture in to swim,
He only stooped to drink at the brim;
But under the reeds the crocodile lay,
And struck with his tail and swept him away.

"Now take me in your boat, I pray,
For down the river lies my way;
And me to the Reed Island bring,
For I will go to the Crocodile King.

"He reigns not now in Crocodilople,
Proud as the Turk at Constantinople;
No ruins of his great city remain;
The Island of Reeds is his whole domain

"Like a dervise there he passes his days,
Turns up his eyes, and fasts and prays;
And being grown pious and meek and mild,
He now never eats man, woman, or child.

"The King of the Crocodiles never does wrong,
He has no tail so stiff and strong,
He has no tail to strike and slay,
But he has ears to hear what I say.

"And to the king I will complain
How my poor child was wickedly slain;
The King of the Crocodiles he is good,
And I shall have the murderer's blood."

The man replied, "No, woman, no;
To the Island of Reeds I will not go;
I would not for any worldly thing
See the face of the Crocodile King."

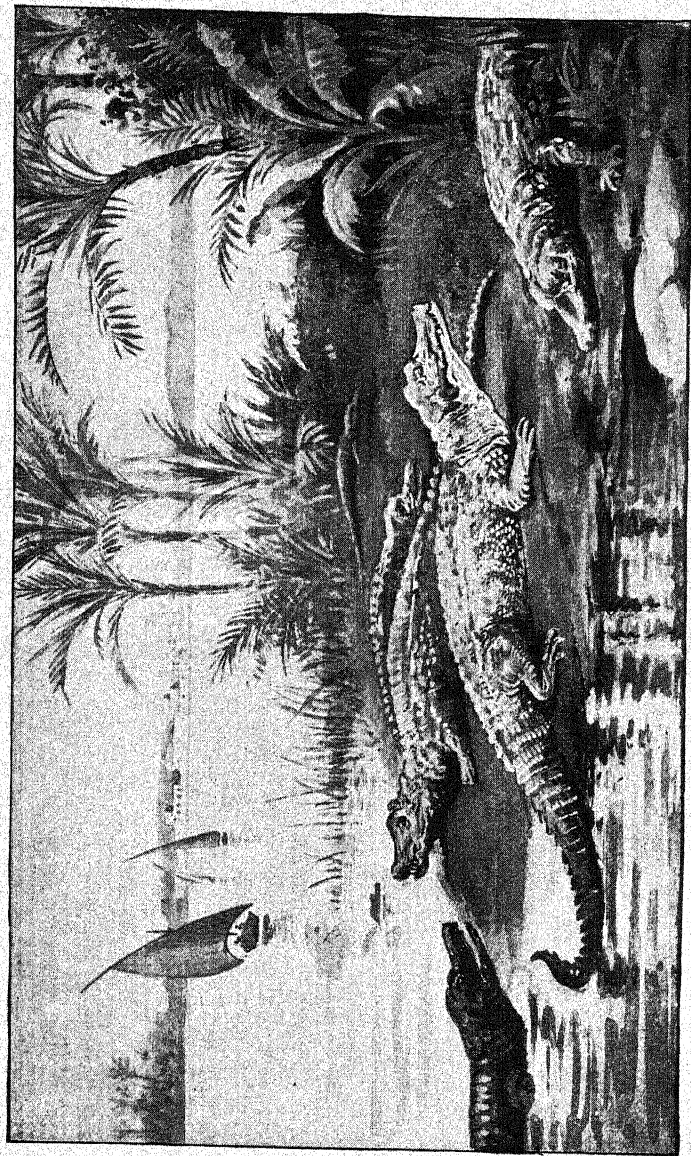
"Then lend me now your little boat,
And I will down the river float;
I tell thee that no worldly thing
Shall keep me from the Crocodile King.

"The King of the Crocodiles he is good,
And therefore will give me blood for blood;
Being so mighty and so just,
He can revenge me, he will, and he must."

The woman she leaped into the boat,
And down the river alone did she float,
And fast with the stream the boat proceeds,
And now she is come to the Island of Reeds.

The King of the Crocodiles there was seen;
He sat upon the eggs of the queen,
And all around, a numerous rout,
The young prince crocodiles crawled about.

The woman shook every limb with fear
As she to the Crocodile King came near;
For never a man, without fear and awe,
The face of his Crocodile Majesty saw.



ON THE NILE.

She fell upon her bended knee,
And said, "O king, have pity on me!
For I have lost my darling child,
And that's the loss that makes me wild

"A crocodile ate him for his food :
Now let me have the murderer's blood ;
Let me have vengeance for my boy—
The only thing that can give me joy.

"I know that you, sire, never do wrong,
You have no tail so stiff and strong,
You have no tail to strike and slay,
But you have ears to hear what I say."

"You have done well," the king replies,
And fixed on her his little eyes ;

"Good woman, yes, you have done right,
But you have not described me quite.

"I have no tail to strike and slay,
And I have ears to hear what you say ;
I have teeth, moreover, as you may see,
And I will make a meal of thee."

Wicked the word and bootless the boast,
As cruel King Crocodile found to his cost ;
And proper reward of tyrannical might,
He showed his teeth, but he missed his bite.

"A meal of me !" the woman cried,
Taking wit in her anger, and courage beside ;
She took him his fore legs and hind between,
And trundled him off the eggs of the queen.

To revenge herself then she did not fail—
He was slow in his motions for want of a tail ;
But well for the woman was it the while
That the queen was gadding abroad in the Nile.

The King of the Crocodiles.

Two crocodile princes, as they played on the sand,
She caught, and grasping them one in each hand,
Thrust the head of one into the throat of the other,
And made each prince crocodile choke his brother.

And when she had trussed three couple this way,
She carried them off and hastened away,
And plying her oars with might and main,
Crossed the river, and got to the shore again.

When the Crocodile Queen came home, she found
That her eggs were broken and scattered around,
And that six young princes, darlings all,
Were missing; for none of them answered her call.

Then many a not very pleasant thing
Passed between her and the Crocodile King.
"Is this your care of the nest?" cried she.
"It comes of your gadding abroad," said he.

The queen had the better in this dispute,
And the Crocodile King found it best to be mute;
While a terrible peal in his ears she rung,
For the queen had a tail as well as a tongue.

In woeful patience he let her rail,
Standing less in fear of her tongue than her tail,
And knowing that all the words which were spoken
Could not mend one of the eggs that were broken.

The woman, meantime, was very well pleased—
She had saved her life, and her heart was eased;
The justice she asked in vain for her son
She had taken herself, and six for one.

"Mash-Allah!" her neighbours exclaimed in delight.
She gave them a funeral supper that night,
Where they all agreed that revenge was sweet,
And young prince crocodiles delicate meat.

SOUTHEY

27. AN ORIENTAL LEGEND.

A king, grown old in glory and renown,
With wisdom wished his happy reign to crown.
Feeling the years turn white upon his head,
He thought upon his end, and thus he said :
" Three sons I have, strong types of sturdy youth,
Bred in all honour, manliness, and truth ;
Honest and brave are they, I know it well ;
But traits there are in all that none may tell.
I'll test them, therefore ; for I fain would know
Which one shall rule the best when I must go."

Thereon he sent a slave to call his sons
Into his presence. Strong and manly ones
They surely were, to glad a father's sight,
And mind him of his spring-time's manly might.
To whom the king : " My sons, the time draws near
When I, your sire, shall be no longer here ;
And I would know which of you I may trust
To wield the sceptre when my hands are dust ;
And to that end I make you this request,
Which of my three sons loves his father best ?"

Then spake the eldest : " Sire, my love for thee
Is deeper, broader, greater than the sea,
Vast as it is, that wets thy kingdom's shore.
Such is my love for thee, my sire, and more."
The second then : " My father and my king,
There is not any yet created thing
In the whole universe, below, above,
To mark the scope and measure of my love."
The youngest simply said : " I cannot tell
Thee more than this—I love my father well"

Two crocodile princes, as they played on the sand,
She caught, and grasping them one in each hand,
Thrust the head of one into the throat of the other,
And made each prince crocodile choke his brother.

And when she had trussed three couple this way,
She carried them off and hastened away,
And plying her oars with might and main,
Crossed the river, and got to the shore again.

When the Crocodile Queen came home, she found
That her eggs were broken and scattered around,
And that six young princes, darlings all,
Were missing ; for none of them answered her call.

Then many a not very pleasant thing
Passed between her and the Crocodile King.
"Is this your care of the nest?" cried she.
"It comes of your gadding abroad," said he.

The queen had the better in this dispute,
And the Crocodile King found it best to be mute ;
While a terrible peal in his ears she rung,
For the queen had a tail as well as a tongue.

In woeful patience he let her rail,
Standing less in fear of her tongue than her tail,
And knowing that all the words which were spoken
Could not mend one of the eggs that were broken.

The woman, meantime, was very well pleased—
She had saved her life, and her heart was eased ;
The justice she asked in vain for her son
She had taken herself, and six for one.

"Mash-Allah!" her neighbours exclaimed in delight.
She gave them a funeral supper that night,
Where they all agreed that revenge was sweet,
And young prince crocodiles delicate meat.

SOUTHEY.

27. AN ORIENTAL LEGEND.

A king, grown old in glory and renown,
With wisdom wished his happy reign to crown.
Feeling the years turn white upon his head,
He thought upon his end, and thus he said :
"Three sons I have, strong types of sturdy youth,
Bred in all honour, manliness, and truth ;
Honest and brave are they, I know it well ;
But traits there are in all that none may tell.
I'll test them, therefore ; for I fain would know
Which one shall rule the best when I must go."

Thereon he sent a slave to call his sons
Into his presence. Strong and manly ones
They surely were, to glad a father's sight,
And mind him of his spring-time's manly might.
To whom the king : "My sons, the time draws near
When I, your sire, shall be no longer here ;
And I would know which of you I may trust
To wield the sceptre when my hands are dust ;
And to that end I make you this request,
Which of my three sons loves his father best?"

Then spake the eldest : "Sire, my love for thee
Is deeper, broader, greater than the sea,
Vast as it is, that wets thy kingdom's shore.
Such is my love for thee, my sire, and more."
The second then : "My father and my king,
There is not any yet created thing
In the whole universe, below, above,
To mark the scope and measure of my love."
The youngest simply said : "I cannot tell
Thee more than this—I love my father well "

An Oriental Legend.

The king dismissed them with a tender word,
And sat and pondered well what he had heard ;
Then called his minister, and to him spake :
“ My lord, a pilgrimage I fain would make
To far-famed Mecca. That I may atone
For sins unpardoned, I will go alone,
Barefooted and bareheaded ; and if I
By Allah shall be called upon to die
While on this pilgrimage, 'tis my command
That my three sons together rule the land.”

A year went by, and yellow were the leaves,
The ripened grain was gathered into sheaves,
And all made ready for the harvest sport,
When through the kingdom—city, camp, and court,
Seaport and hamlet—the sad news was sped,
That the wise ruler and just king was dead.
Loved as a monarch tender, brave, and true,
His people mourned him deeply as his due.
His sons were told the words the king had said,
And reigned together in their father's stead.

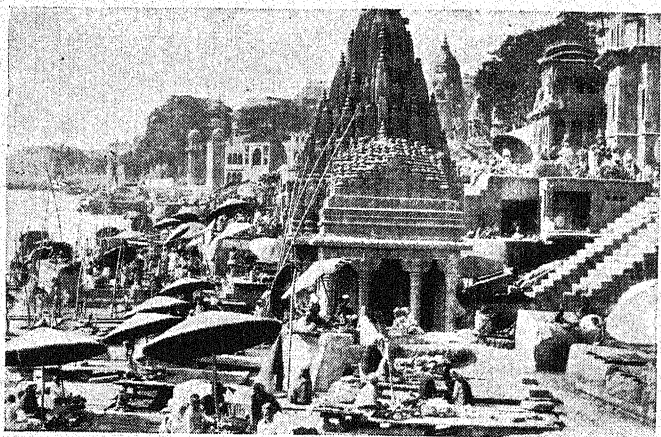
The calendar had marked another year,
And on the drooping stalk the full-grown ear
Through golden husk and silken tassel showed,
When wearily along the dusty road
A beggar slowly moved towards the town.
Outside the open gate he sat him down
And rested. Suddenly his thoughts were bent
Upon a man near by, with garments rent,
Who sighed, and wept, and beat upon his breast,
And ever made this moan, “ I loved him best.”

“ Friend,” said the beggar, “ tell, if I may know,
What is the cause and secret of thy woe.
Allah hath certain cure for every ill ;

Thine may He soften !” For a moment still
The other sat ; then, with fresh tears, he said :
“ Great is my loss. I mourn the king that’s dead.
Ah ! never more shall men see such a one.
He was my father, I his oldest son.”
And then he beat once more upon his breast,
And rent his clothes, and cried, “ I loved him best.”

The beggar sighed. “ Such love must Allah prize.
Thy brothers ? mourn they also in this wise ? ”
“ Not so,” the mourner said. “ The next in age
His grief with other thoughts did soon assuage ;
With horse and hounds his hours are spent in sport,
To the great shame and sorrow of the court.
The youngest bears the pains and cares of state ;
Works out our father’s plans ; to low and great
Meteth out justice with impartial hand,
And is beloved and honoured in the land.”

The beggar left the son on grief intent,
And straightway to the court his footsteps bent ;
Cast off his beggar’s clothes before the throne,
And, clad in purple, proudly claimed his own ;
Cried, in a voice that made the arches ring,
“ Hear ye, my people ! As I am your king,
My power, my crown, my sceptre, and my throne
Go to my youngest son, and him alone !—
Son of my heart, I fold thee to my breast ;
Who doth his father’s work loves him the best.”



SCENES IN BENARES.

28. THE PLATE OF GOLD.

One day there fell in great Benares' temple-court
A wondrous plate of gold, whereon these words were writ:
"To him who loveth best, a gift from Heaven."

Thereat

The priests made proclamation: "At the mid-day hour,
Each day, let those assemble who for virtue deem
Their right to Heaven's gift the best; and we will hear
The deeds of mercy done, and so adjudge."

The news

Ran swift as light, and soon from every quarter came
Nobles and peasants, hermits, scholars, holy men,
And all renowned for gracious or for splendid deeds.
Meanwhile the priests in solemn council sat, and heard
What each had done to merit best the gift of Heaven.
So for a year the claimants came and went.

At last,

After a patient weighing of the worth of all,
The priest bestowed the plate of gold on one who seemed
The largest lover of the race—whose whole estate
Within the year had parted been among the poor.
This man, all trembling with his joy, advanced to take
The golden plate—when, lo, at his first finger-touch
It changed to basest lead! All stood aghast; but when
The hapless claimant dropped it clanging on the floor,
Heaven's guerdon was again transformed to shining gold.

So for another twelvemonth sat the priests and judged;
Thrice they awarded—thrice did Heaven refuse the gift.
Meanwhile a host of poor maimed beggars in the street
Lay all about the temple gate, in hope to move

That love whereby each claimant hoped to win the gift.
And well for them it was (if gold be charity),
For every pilgrim to the temple gate praised God
That love might thus approve itself before the test.
And so the coins rained freely in the outstretched hands ;
But none of those who gave so much as turned to look
Into the poor sad eyes of them that begged.

And now
The second year had almost passed, but still the plate
Of gold, by whomsoever touched, was turned to lead.
At length there came a simple peasant—not aware
Of that strange contest for the gift of God—to pay
A vow within the temple. As he passed along
The line of shrivelled beggars, all his soul was moved
Within him to sweet pity, and the tears welled up
And trembled in his eyes.

Now by the temple gate
There lay a poor sore creature, blind, and shunned by all ;
But when the peasant came, and saw the sightless face
And trembling, festered hands, he could not pass, but knelt,
And took both palms in his, and softly said, "O thou
My brother, bear thy trouble bravely ; God is good."
Then he arose and walked straightway across the court,
And entered where they wrangled of their deeds of love
Before the priests.

Awhile he listened sadly, then
Had turned away ; but something moved the priest who
held
The plate of gold to beckon to the peasant. So
He came, not understanding, and obeyed, and stretched
His hand, and took the sacred vessel. Lo ! it shone
With thrice its former lustre, and amazed them all.

"Son," cried the priest, "rejoice ! The gift of God is thine ;
Thou lovest best !" And all made answer, "It is well."

29. ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY
CHURCHYARD.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,

The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds ;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care ;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

158 Elegy written in a Country Churchyard.

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of Heraldry, the pomp of Power,
And all that Beauty, all that Wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tombs no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard. 159

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;
Some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest ;
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined,—
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of Mercy on mankind.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even their bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply ;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

THOMAS GRAY.

THE END.